

THE
LOCAL COLOUR OF THE BIBLE

THE LOCAL COLOUR OF THE BIBLE

BY

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AND THE REV.

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PREFACE.

THIS volume, which completes the series of articles dealing with the background to the Biblical narrative, is arranged upon a plan which differs in some respects from that of the first two volumes. For the structure of the four Gospels precludes that continuous treatment in historic sequence which we followed in the books of the Old Testament. The four Gospels tell the same story, though their style and chronology vary, so that, even if the incidents in the Life of our Lord were placed chronologically, the system by which the separate books of the Bible have been dealt with in the previous volumes would involve, in this one, needless repetition and complex cross-references.

Yet some means had to be devised for ready reference. It is obvious that when dealing with the local colour of the Bible a reader can find an index useful only if he knows what he should look up, for there exist in the pages of Scripture many interesting allusions which are not known to every one, and what is unknown can hardly be a subject of inquiry. This difficulty was met in the previous volumes, and in the Book of Acts in the present one, by placing the articles under their respec-

tive groups of verses or chapters in Biblical sequence. In the Gospels we have tried to satisfy this need by grouping the articles under such comprehensive and descriptive headings as *The Birth and Early Years of Our Lord*, *Jewish Institutions and Observances*, *Jesus in the Home*, *Jesus in the Town*, and *The Scenes of Jesus' Ministry*.

The Epistles also need specialized treatment. The local colour of some of the Epistles, notably Hebrews, is difficult to define. We are faced, too, with the speculative thought of the classical world in its influences upon Christian argument, so that the domain of theology is easily invaded. But the presentation of theological views forms no part of our plan, though topical views must find some place in our descriptive matter.

CHARLES W. BUDDEN.

EDWARD HASTINGS.

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THE LOCAL COLOUR OF THE BIBLE.

THE GOSPELS.

THE BIRTH AND EARLY YEARS OF OUR LORD.

THE MESSIANIC HOPE.

THE word "Messiah" is from the Hebrew *Mashiah*, and, like its Greek equivalent "Christ," means "Anointed One." The custom of anointing which gave rise to this title was an ancient one originally connected with magical beliefs, and based on the idea that pouring oil on a person endowed him with special qualities, just as the Arabs of Eastern Africa believe that an ointment of lion's fat inspires a man with boldness. In Old Testament times kings, prophets, and priests, were anointed with oil, the idea being that they were thus set apart, consecrated to office by Divine appointment. But there was also a wider use of the word anointed. The Patriarchs were called "God's anointed ones"; Cyrus, the deliverer of Israel, and even the nation itself were described as "anointed."

The conception of a Messiah apart from God Himself was not part of the "hope" in its original form. It was God who was to come in His full glory to His people, to set up His throne in Zion, and reign over all the nations (Ps. 47). "Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompence of God ; he will come and save you" (Is. 35⁴). Some of the writers who have most to say of the blessings of the coming age make no mention of a Messiah, and think of the kingdom as under the immediate sovereignty of God Himself.

The fountain-head of Messianic prophecy is undoubtedly to be found in Nathan's promise to David : "I will set up thy seed after thee, and I will establish his kingdom. And thine house and thy kingdom shall be made sure for ever before thee" (2 Sam. 7¹²⁻¹⁶). Among the anointed or Messiah-kings of Israel none came to have so important a place in Hebrew thought as David. During the Exile the Jews had clung with passionate hope to the belief in the permanent survival of his house. They had regarded such a statement as that of Isaiah, "I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David" (Is. 55³), as a promise of this, and peculiarly inspired. Micah, too, the contemporary of Isaiah, had pictured a new kingdom, which was to be established in Zion, having over it a king from Bethlehem (Mic. 5²). So, afterwards, Jeremiah had written : "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute judgement and justice in the land. In his days

Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely : and this is his name whereby he shall be called, the Lord is our righteousness" (Jer 23⁵⁻⁶). We can see how concrete and definite these hopes were by the fact that Zerubbabel, who was in the Davidic line, is hailed by Zechariah as the "Branch."

But the Messianic King of Davidic descent was not the only line of anticipation respecting Israel's salvation. There were at least two others, namely, the Prophetic Ideal, based on Deut. 18¹⁵ : "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me ; unto him ye shall hearken" ; and the "Suffering Servant of Yahweh," portrayed in greatest detail in the familiar fifty-third chapter of Isaiah. With regard to the latter it may be said that the picture of the "Suffering Servant" does not appear to have influenced the later Messianic ideals of the Jews. Their minds were too occupied with thoughts of a universal kingdom to believe that their promised Messiah could be a lowly figure, "despised and rejected of men ; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief."

The pre-Exilic prophets undoubtedly believed that the Messiah would come in their own day and generation, but the catastrophe of the Exile compelled a readjustment of this hope. At first the banished Jews looked for a speedy restoration, an idea strongly combated by Ezekiel. But "hope deferred maketh the heart sick," and despair replaced the early optimism. Then came the deliverance by Cyrus, who was looked

upon as the instrument of God, and there arose a new ideal. "Jehovah would care for His people as a shepherd cared for his sheep, and the land to which they would return would be renewed (Ezek. 34¹¹⁻³¹) while the nations would support Israel and fear Jehovah (Is. 49²²⁻²³). Jehovah would make an everlasting covenant with His people (Is. 55¹⁻⁵), but the new nation would not be composed of all those who had been swept into exile, and their descendants. It would rather be a righteous community, purified by suffering. Thus the hope rises to that recognition of the individual which Ezekiel was the first to emphasize so strongly." ¹

After the Exile and the Return, the fulfilment of the hope of a Divine kingdom of righteousness was still delayed, and the Messianic age seemed as far off as ever. The "hope" therefore languished, and the plaintive note of the post-Exilic hymns is full of pathos, for example, Ps. 77⁸⁻⁹. Particularly did the promises of the prophets seem vain at the time of the Greek persecutions under Antiochus Epiphanes. It was then that there arose that new type of religious literature called apocalyptic (see art. p. 320), and in this literature the Messianic idea was very considerably developed.

Despairing of the present world, which they considered to be altogether evil, the apocalyptic writers fixed their attention and their hope upon a new age, a new order of things, which would be brought in by God Himself. The advent of the Kingdom of God was to be heralded by extraordinary natural phenomena; for the belief was

¹ Shailer Mathews, "Messiah," Hastings' *DB.* (one vol.).

current that there was some kind of association between man and nature, and that the struggles of humanity would be presaged by physical cataclysms. That the literature of the period influenced men's thoughts in this direction at the time of our Lord is suggested by the parallelism between Mt. 24 and parts of the Sibylline Oracles. The following is an example :

“ When swords upon the star-lit heavens
 Appear at even and at morn,
 Then will the whirlwind come from heaven
 Upon the earth ; the sun above
 At mid-day e'en will cease to shine,
 The moon instead will give her light,
 And come again upon the earth.
 One sign will be that drops of blood
 Will flow down from the very rocks ;
 And in the clouds shall ye behold
 A conflict fought 'twixt warriors fierce,
 Likewise a chase upon wild beasts,—
 All seemingly in hazy mist.
 Then shall the Lord Who dwells in heaven
 Bring all things to their final end ” (III. 798-806).

The Messiah would then appear—some said from Bethlehem, others from Jerusalem—and with His coming would begin a last fierce war in which the enemies of the Jews would be utterly destroyed. The dead would rise, and angels, as well as men, would come before His tribunal for judgment. Sinners and the fallen angels would be sent away into eternal punishment and the earth purified from all evil. Heaven and earth would be transformed and an eternal kingdom established, in which all the righteous, whether dead or alive, would share, and in which God would reign.

In the time of our Lord there were almost as many different conceptions of the Messiah's person and work as there were sects and parties in the land. The Sadducees, of course, desired no Messiah. "Denying angels and spirits, the resurrection and the future life, they had no conception of a divine judgment at the End of the World, or of a Messianic deliverer. They studied to maintain the Temple-worship in its integrity, and to live on good terms with the Roman Empire."

While there were various sects among the Pharisees, and various anticipations of the kingdom, all were agreed that its coming depended on the strict keeping of the Law. There was a current saying to the effect that if all Israel would keep the Law perfectly for a single day the Messiah would come. The Pharisees waited for God to take the initiative, and looked for the kingdom to be established by Him, or by the Messiah acting as His representative.

The Zealots, on the other hand, "were impatient both of the ineffectual methods of the Pharisees and of the masterly inactivity of the Sadducees." They were eager to force the issue themselves and to effect their deliverance by active rebellion, believing that if they began the holy war against their enemies God would reward their faith by sending the Messiah to their aid.

To a considerable extent this was also the character of the popular "hope." The majority of the common people looked for a national Deliverer or King, a Son of David, who would lead them to victory and restore the ancient glories of Israel. Even John the Baptist

seems to have shared to some extent the popular view, and to have been perplexed by the fact that Jesus took a course so different from the general expectation. It was this, no doubt, that led him to send his disciples to Jesus with the inquiry: "Art thou he that cometh, or look we for another?" (Mt. 11³).

But there were others, particularly those known as "the quiet in the land," who looked hopefully and prayerfully for the coming of a personal Messiah, and for moral and spiritual redemption through Him. "They were simple in their thought, nourished their life on the Old Testament Scriptures, and lived in communion with God." Of such were Zacharias the priest, Joseph and Mary, Simeon and Anna.

THE THIRD LOT.

An immense number of priests was needed for the proper maintenance of the Temple services and sacrifices. They were divided into twenty-four groups or "courses," the order of which was determined by lot. Of these courses the eighth is recorded in 1 Chron. 24¹¹ as falling to Abijah, and it was to this order that Zacharias belonged (Lk. 1⁵), who was on duty at the time of the gospel narrative. Such duty was for one week, twice in a year.

To the members of the course thus chosen the special duties of each day were assigned by lots, cast in the Hall of Hewn and Polished Stones (see art. HEROD'S TEMPLE, p. 55). Four separate lots were cast each

morning. The first determined who should cleanse and prepare the altar of burnt-offering ; the second, those who were to offer the sacrifice ; the third selected the priests for the burning of the incense in the Holy Place and the cleaning of the seven-branched candlestick ; while the fourth declared who were to perform the concluding parts of the worship. Of these lots the third was the most important. It was regarded as one of special honour, and the lot was cast only after prayer and confession.

No one might burn the incense who had before ministered in that office, so that the honour fell but once to any priest in his lifetime. The routine of the service is thus described by Dr. Edersheim :

“The incensing priest and his assistants now approached the altar of burnt-offering. One filled with incense a golden censer held in a silver vessel, while another placed in a golden bowl burning coals from the altar. As they passed from the court into the Holy Place they struck a large instrument (called the ‘Magrephah’), at sound of which the priests hastened from all parts to worship, and the Levites to occupy their places in the service of song ; while the chief of the ‘stationary men’ ranged at the gate of Nicanor such of the people as were to be purified that day. Slowly the incensing priest and his assistants ascended the steps to the Holy Place, preceded by the two priests who had formerly dressed the altar and the candlestick, and who now removed the vessels they had left behind, and, worshipping, withdrew. Next, one of the

assistants reverently spread the coals on the golden altar; the other arranged the incense; and then the chief officiating priest was left alone within the Holy Place to await the signal of the president before burning the incense. As the president gave the word of command, which marked that 'the time of incense had come,' 'the whole multitude of the people without' withdrew from the inner court, and fell down before the Lord, spreading their hands in silent prayer."¹

It was while the people were praying thus that the angel Gabriel is recorded in Lk. 1¹⁰⁻¹¹ to have appeared before Zacharias. It was probably this solemn period also that suggested the imagery in Rev. 8^{3ff.}

The prayers ended, the priest who had trimmed the candlestick once more entered the Holy Place to kindle the two lamps that had remained unlit, while he who had offered the incense appeared before the people and pronounced the Priestly Benediction (Num. 6²⁴⁻²⁶). If this duty fell to Zacharias, as incensing priest for the day, the significance of Lk. 1^{21, 22} is made clear.

JOHN THE PROPHET AND FORERUNNER.

As every Eastern traveller has discovered, roads, in our sense of the term, are not built by the Oriental. He relies instead on the wearing of a track by the feet of men and of baggage animals, who, generation after generation, walk round the same boulder, make the

¹ A. Edersheim, *The Temple*, p. 166.

same circuit round the same hollow, and cross the wady at the same place. No one ever dreams of cutting and levelling, banking or making up the road in any way. But let a high dignitary plan a journey and all is changed. Pioneers are hurriedly sent forward along the whole route; the neighbouring population is pressed into service, and made to prepare the way without fee or reward; stones are laid where a stronger foothold is needed, or gathered up where they form obstacles to progress; and then, when the highway is ready, heralds are sent forth proclaiming the advent of the great man. So the prophet cries, "Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the high way; gather out the stones; lift up an ensign for the peoples" (Is. 62¹⁰).

"Twice," says Canon Tristram, "it has been my good fortune to see such preparations. On one occasion the Imperial heir of Austria was to visit the Pasha of Jerusalem. At that time there was not, as there is now, a carriage road from Jaffa (which is still the only passable track for a wheel conveyance in the country), much less a railway; and heavy rains had washed the road into a mere rugged watercourse. A crowd of labourers and Turkish soldiers were sent forth to level the track with their mattocks and shovels, and their officers, prancing about on horseback, might be seen pointing to the heaps of detritus as they passed, and calling out, 'Gather out the stones.' Thus the road was made straight and smooth for the time. But this lasts not long. The first thunderstorm washes all this

loose earth away, and the old rocks and watercourses reappear.”¹

But there is also another set of forerunners, namely, those who run immediately before the royal cavalcade. This is a very ancient custom and is referred to in several Old Testament passages, for example, 1 Sam 8¹¹, 1 Kings 1⁵, Mal. 3¹, etc. “In precisely the same manner in which Saul and Rehoboam and the pretender, Adonijah, kept these men as ‘runners,’ so the Shah, and likewise the Prince-Governors of Persia, still maintain men who occupy the same office and fulfil the same duties. They are all dressed in a peculiar and picturesque costume, those of the Shah himself wearing a costume modelled on that in use some centuries ago. These runners precede their royal or lordly masters, whenever they go forth from their residences. They run ahead of the horse or carriage at a swift trot, and do not scruple to use the long staff or wand they carry in their hands to beat away, out of the road, all who are not possessed of the agility required to efface themselves before the coming of the great and august personages.”²

This, then, is the picture of John a Forerunner in Mt. 11¹¹, Mk. 1^{2, 3}, Lk. 7²⁷, and Jn. 1²³, and of Christ a Forerunner in Heb. 6²⁰.

John is the only person in the Bible who is mentioned as having raiment of “camel’s hair” (Mt. 3⁴, Mk. 1⁶), unless the marginal reference to Elijah in the Revised

¹ H. B. Tristram, *Eastern Customs in Bible Lands*, p. 61.

² E. J. Clifton, *Bible Illustrations from Persia of To-day*, p. 120.

Version is the correct reading of 2 Kings 1⁸. To the Western reader, who at once thinks of camel's hair as soft, such a garment must be visualized far otherwise than it really is. It is true that the Persians sometimes weave soft cloth from camel's hair, but for the most part it is exceedingly coarse and heavy, and is used by the Arabs for their tents as well as for clothing. The reference, of course, is to the outer cloak which formed the night covering or blanket as well as a coat by day. The leather girdle worn by the Baptist would be in keeping with this coarse garment. The richer people wear soft silken girdles, often spending a great deal of money upon them as one of the legitimate forms of men's finery. Leather is used by the poorer peasant class.

John's food was "locusts and wild honey." This still constitutes a common diet with the Bedawîn. When preparing locusts for food they throw them alive into boiling water containing a good deal of salt, and then, after a minute or two, take them out and dry them in the sun. Afterwards they pluck off the legs and wings, clean the bodies from the salt, and pack the locusts in bags. In this way they are easily carried. When they are to be eaten they are fried in butter or honey, the latter being gathered from the trees and rocks. This food is despised by all but the very poor.

In Mt. 3¹¹, Mk. 1⁷, Lk. 3¹⁶, the Baptist refers to our Lord as one whose shoes he is not worthy to bear, and the latchet of which he is unworthy to unloose. Says Rihbany, "The feet are ceremonially unclean; there-

fore it is very improper for one to mention the feet or the shoes in conversation, without first making ample apology by saying to his hearer, *Ajell Allah shanak* (May God elevate your dignity), that is, above what is about to be mentioned. In the presence of an aristocrat, however, no apology is sufficient to atone for the mention of such an unclean object as the shoes. Therefore, when one says to another, in pleading for a favour, 'I would carry your shoes, or bow at your feet,' he sinks to the lowest depth of humility. So, when some of those who came to be baptized thought that John the Baptist was the promised One of Israel, he humbled himself in Oriental fashion by saying that he was not worthy to carry the shoes of the coming Deliverer, or even to touch the latchet with which those shoes were tied to the ankles. In this last expression, the sandals, rather than the shoes, are meant."¹

No one who has travelled in the East can fail to see the force of the reference in Lk. 37, "Ye offspring of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" for the simile is obviously taken from the picture of the scrub fires which are so common in the hot season. These are like prairie fires on a small scale. Fanned by the wind they spread with extreme rapidity, while snakes and other reptiles, animals, and insects flee terrified in front of the flames, and often flee in vain.

¹ A. M. Rihbany, *The Syrian Christ*, p. 275.

AN EASTERN INN.

In Lk. 27 it is recorded that Joseph and Mary were unable to find shelter in the "inn," and it is generally assumed that this was of the type known to-day as a "khan."

"A khan," says Canon Tristram, "consists of a spacious square enclosure with a gateway, by the side of which is the keeper's lodge. All that he is expected to provide is straw for sleeping on, and water. Everything else the traveller is supposed to bring with him. You pass through the gateway and enter the hollow square, on all sides of which are rows of chambers, open in front for the animals, and some few with wooden fixed screens in front, or even walled in, so as to form chambers for the convenience of the women and the more fastidious guests. Most of the men prefer to sleep under the open arches by the side of their beasts and their merchandise. The camels kneel down in the open central space. For the accommodation a very small sum is expected by the keeper.

"On one occasion, while travelling on the open plain of Mesopotamia, between Orfa and Diarbekir, I halted at nightfall at such a khan. The well was just within the gate. The keeper charged us a sum amounting to about threepence English per head for our night's lodging, and for each animal, including drawing water for them, and supplying us with straw. Our store of food had fallen short, and we had to ask our host for supper. He willingly shared his own simple meal in

his house with us, but for this act of hospitality he would make no charge, though, of course, ready to accept a baksheesh at parting. The Samaritan in our Lord's parable (Lk. 10³⁴ 35), before resuming his journey, gives two denarii to provide in anticipation for the wants of the wounded traveller. As a denarius was the ordinary wage for a day's labour, it was therefore by no means an insufficient recompense, especially as he was about to return, probably in a few days, when he had transacted his business at Jericho."¹

There were other types of inns to be found in Palestine, apparently managed by the Romans. Thus Josephus relates that when Herod the Great was celebrating the games at Cæsarea he entertained a number of ambassadors and other visitors at the public inns. These would seem to be the ancient prototype of the modern hotel. There were also taverns, where the lowest classes of the people would be found, while between these two extremes were other inns of varying grades. It has been suggested that the advice in 1 Pet. 4⁹, "using hospitality one to another," arose from the bad repute in which many of these inns were held by respectable people.

THE WISE MEN.

The star and the Magi have naturally given rise to many legends. "The country, the number, and the names of the illustrious visitors," says Dr. Geikie, "are as entirely passed over by the Apocrypha as by the

¹ H. B. Tristram, *Eastern Customs in Bible Lands*, p. 218.

Gospels, but later tradition abundantly atones for the omission. They were said to be the kings of Sheba and Seba, in Arabia, come to offer gifts to His light and to the brightness of His rising; but Persia, Chaldea, Ethiopia, and India have each had their advocates. It is equally undetermined in the legends whether they were Jews or heathen, though most of the Fathers favour the idea that they were the latter, and the Arabic Gospel of the Infancy represents them as worshipping fire, and as referring to a prophecy of Zoroaster respecting the Messiah. Their three gifts led to the fancy that they themselves were only three in number, which was supposed to correspond to the three divisions of the earth as then known—Europe, Asia, and Africa. Sometimes, however, they are spoken of as twelve, to correspond with the Apostles, and their names given, with the special gift which each presented. Their kingdoms also were mentioned, and their very ages, which are made to represent youth, manhood, and grey hairs. Bede, indeed, is able to tell us that Melchior was an old man, with long white hair, a sweeping beard, and that he gave the gold as to a king; that Caspar was a beardless youth, with a ruddy face, and that he presented the frankincense, as a gift worthy the God; that Balthasar was a swarthy, strong-bearded man, and gave the myrrh for the burial. In the cathedral at Cologne visitors may yet see the supposed skulls of the three, set in jewels, and exhibited in a great gilded shrine. They are said to have been discovered by Bishop Reinald of Cologne in the twelfth century.

“Imagination has been equally busy with the star. The Arabic Gospel of the Infancy says it was an angel in the form of a star, and several of the Fathers were of the same opinion. Origen believed it to have been a comet. One tradition is beautiful. In the farthest East, it says, lived a people who had a book which bore the name of Seth, and in this was written the appearance of the star of the Messiah, and the offering of gifts to Him. This book was handed down from father to son, generation after generation. Twelve men were chosen who should watch for the star, and when one died another was chosen in his place. These men, in the speech of the land, were called Magi. They went, each year, after the wheat harvest, to the top of a mountain, which was called the mountain of victory. It had a cave in it, and was pleasant by its springs and trees. At last the star appeared, and in it the form of a little child, and over him the sign of the cross; and the star itself spoke to them, and told them to go to Judæa. For two years, which was the time of their journey, the star moved before them, and they wanted neither food nor drink. Gregory of Tours adds that the star sank, at last, into a spring at Bethlehem, where he himself had seen it, and where it still may be seen, but only by pure maidens.”¹

It was quite in keeping with Jewish belief to find indications of great events in the appearance of the heavens, for their ancient law had declared, “There shall come forth a star out of Jacob,” and they had long

¹ C. Geikie, *The Life and Words of Christ*, vol. i. p. 153.

referred this prophecy to their expected Messiah. It was, indeed, universally believed that the birth and death of great men were heralded by or associated with, celestial phenomena. Thus Josephus relates that for a whole year before the fall of Jerusalem a star in the shape of a sword hung over the doomed city. "The planets give wisdom and riches," says the Talmud. And again, "The life and portion of children hang not on righteousness but on their star." Many Rabbis studied astrology, and they had a proverb, "The calculation of the stars is the joy of the Rabbi."

Herodotus tells us that the Magi formed one of six tribes or castes of the Medes. Considerable divergence of opinion exists as to whether Matthew, who alone mentions them (2^{1st}.), refers to a particular caste, or whether they are to be understood simply as foreign astrologers. The Rab-mag of Jer. 39³.¹³ etc., is believed to represent the sacred caste, and a ritual observance still preserved in Parsi worship figures in Ezek. 8¹⁷ (see art. THE BRANCH TO THE NOSE, vol. ii. p. 232). The modern Parsi worship appears to be the survival of the Magian religion; and in the belief that part of the human personality dwells in heaven, shares his development, and unites with his soul at death, we have the parallel to the ancient idea that a new star may be the heavenly counterpart of a great man newly born.

The gifts brought by the Wise Men to the Infant Jesus consisted of "gold and frankincense and myrrh" (Mt. 2¹¹). All three commodities were brought to

Palestine from the East, and from Arabia in particular. Frankincense is a fragrant gum obtained by slitting the bark of the tree *Boswellia serrata*. This tree is found in Arabia and in India, and somewhat resembles the mountain-ash. The gum exudes as a milky juice which slowly sets into irregular lumps. It was valued for its pleasant odour when burnt (cf. Exod. 30³⁴), and it was also used for illumination, as a flavouring to wine, and as a medicine.

Myrrh, an ingredient in the holy oil (Exod. 30²³), is another gum-resin, and is the exudation of the shrub *Balsamodendron myrrha*, from which it is obtained in the same way as frankincense. It was, and still is, valued for its medicinal action, and it was further used in the process of embalming (Jn. 19^{39, 40}).

THE SYRIAN CARPENTER.

The question in Mk. 6³, "Is not this the carpenter?" (cf. Matt. 13⁵⁵), is of peculiar interest in that it tells us how the early years of our Lord were spent. Every Jew set his son to a trade. "He who does not teach his son a trade," says the Talmud, "teaches him to be a thief." Thus Paul was a tent-maker, the great Hillel was a wood-cutter, and among the celebrated Rabbis of that day we find shoemakers, tailors, smiths, potters, builders, in short, every type of manual labourer. "The tradesman at his work need not rise before the greatest doctor"; "Though there were seven years of famine, it will never come to the door of the tradesman," are

other current sayings, all showing how highly and properly esteemed was honest work.

In the apocryphal "Book of Ecclesiasticus," however, the carpenter, together with other craftsmen, is somewhat held up to scorn. The attitude of our Lord's townsfolk is in accord with that shown by this writer, who tells his readers that "wisdom cometh by opportunity of leisure, and he that hath little business shall become wise." He asks, "How can he get wisdom that holdeth the plough, and that glorieth in the goad, that driveth oxen, and is occupied in their labours, and whose talk is of bullocks?" And he adds, "So is every carpenter and work-master that laboureth night and day. . . . All these trust to their hands, and every one is wise in his work. They shall not be sought for in public counsel, nor sit high in the congregation. They shall not sit in the judges' seat, nor understand the sentence of judgment. They cannot declare justice and judgment, and they shall not be found where parables are spoken."

Attempts have been made to find in Christ's utterances some references to the trade in which it is assumed that He was engaged for so many years, but unless the metaphor of the green wood and the dry (Lk. 23³¹) and that of the splinter and the beam (Mt. 7³⁻⁵) are reminiscent of the carpenter's shop none has been preserved.

The carpenter in New Testament days was not confined to the limitations of the craft to-day, but combined the work of the cabinetmaker, the wood-carver, the ploughwright, and other specialized arts. The tools

which are in use at the present day are of a very primitive character, consisting of "a few tiny saws, with the teeth set the reverse way to those of our saws, a small plane, two or three chisels of various sizes, a drill worked by a bow, and a narrow, much-curved adze, in the use of which the carpenter is as skilful as a shipwright. He does not use a carpenter's bench, but squats on the ground to work, and, where he has to use both hands, holds the thing he is working at with his feet. It is rarely a remunerative employment, and to make a living the carpenter must either have land of his own, or must combine some other occupation with it. In the little town of Nazareth there would probably have been but scanty work for the carpenter, and the Saviour, in all probability, must have known at times the pinch of real want."¹

THE BOY JESUS IN THE TEMPLE.

"The familiarity from earliest childhood with the Scriptures in the Hebrew original explains how at the age of twelve Jesus could be found 'in the Temple; sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions' (Lk. 2⁴⁶). In explaining this seemingly strange circumstance, we may take the opportunity of correcting an almost universal mistake. It is generally thought that, on the occasion referred to, the Saviour had gone up, as being 'of age,' in the Jewish sense of the expression, or, to use their own terms,

¹ C. T. Wilson, *Peasant Life in the Holy Land*, p. 242.

as a 'Bar Mizvah,' or 'son of the commandment,' by which the period was marked when religious obligations and privileges devolved upon a youth, and he became a member of the congregation. But the legal age for this was not twelve, but thirteen. On the other hand, the Rabbinical law enjoined that even before that—two years, or at least one year—lads should be brought up to the Temple, and made to observe the festive rites. Unquestionably, it was in conformity with this universal custom that Jesus went on the occasion named to the Temple. Again, we know that it was the practice of the members of the various Sanhedrins—who on ordinary days sat as judicatories, from the close of the morning to the time of the evening sacrifice—to come out upon the Sabbath and feast-days on 'the terrace of the Temple,' and there publicly to teach and expound, the utmost liberty being giving of asking questions, discussing, objecting, and otherwise taking intelligent part in these lectures. On the occasion of Christ's presence, these discussions would, as usual, be carried on during the 'Moed Katon,' or minor festive days, intervening between the second and the last day of the Paschal week. Joseph and Mary, on the other hand, had, as allowed by the law, returned towards Nazareth on the third day of the Paschal week, while Jesus remained behind. These circumstances also explain why His appearance in the midst of the doctors, although very remarkable considering His age, did not at once command universal attention. In point of fact, the only qualification requisite, so far as learning was

concerned, would be a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures in the Hebrew, and a proper understanding of them.”¹

JEWISH EDUCATION.

A child's first school was his home, and his first teachers, in accordance with the command in Deut. 6⁶. 7, were his parents.

But the home instruction did not consist so much in regularized teaching as in the training which naturally resulted from the family ritual conducted by the father. The home and synagogue festivals, the pilgrimages to Jerusalem, the Mezuzah (see art. vol. i. p. 177), which hung upon the doorway, the phylacteries and tallith worn at prayer-time would all give opportunities of questioning and hearing the history of the religion which was symbolized in these various observances.

We may assume, too, that religious parents would relate to their children the Old Testament stories. It is unlikely that these were *read* in the home, not merely because reading and writing were not very common accomplishments, but on account of the expense involved in the purchase of even that portion of the Bible which they called the Law. Thus our Lord, in making reference to the Scriptures when speaking to the common people, does not say, “Have ye not *read*,” but, “Ye have *heard*” (Mt. 5²¹. 27. 33). And similarly, the disciples asked Him, “Why then *say* the scribes?” (Mt. 17¹⁰). But it should be noted that when our Lord was

¹ A. Edersheim, *Jewish Social Life in the Days of Christ*, p. 119.

in controversy with the Rabbis He said, "Did ye never *read*" (Mt. 21^{16. 42}), and, "Have ye not *read*" (Mt. 22³¹). This remarkable accuracy in the Gospel narrative deserves notice.

Our Lord could both read and write (Lk. 4¹⁶, Jn. 8⁸). These arts could be learnt in the synagogue elementary schools.

"Commonly," says Dr. Edersheim, "its teacher was the 'Chazan,' or 'minister' (Lk. 4²⁰); by which expression we are to understand not a spiritual office, but something like that of a beadle. This officer was salaried by the congregation, nor was he allowed to receive fees from his pupils, lest he should show favour to the rich. The expenses were met by voluntary and charitable contributions; and in the case of deficiency the most distinguished Rabbis did not hesitate to go about and collect aid from the wealthy. The number of hours during which the junior classes were kept in school was limited. As the close air of the schoolroom might prove injurious during the heat of the day, lessons were intermitted between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. For similar reasons, only four hours were allowed for the instruction between the seventeenth of Tammuz and the ninth of Ab (about July and August), and teachers were forbidden to chastise their pupils during these months; the highest honour and distinction attached to the office of a teacher, if worthily discharged. Want of knowledge or of method was regarded as sufficient cause for removing a teacher; but experience was always deemed a better qualification than mere acquire-

ments No teacher was employed who was not a married man. To discourage unwholesome rivalry, and to raise the general educational standard, parents were prohibited from sending their children to other than the schools of their own town.

“A very beautiful trait was the care bestowed on the very poor and on orphans. In the Temple there was a special receptacle—that ‘of the secret’—for contributions, which were privately applied for the education of the children of the pious poor. To adopt and bring up an orphan was regarded as specially a ‘good work.’ This reminds us of the apostolic description of a ‘widow; indeed,’ as one ‘well reported of for good works’; who ‘had brought up children, lodged strangers, washed the saints’ feet, relieved the afflicted, diligently followed every good work’ (1 Tim. 5¹⁰). Indeed, orphans were the special charge of the whole congregation—not thrust into poorhouses—and parochial authorities were even bound to provide a fixed dowry for female orphans.”¹

As the text-book of the synagogue school was the Book of the Law, the school was commonly spoken of as “The House of the Book,” so distinguishing it from the House of the Midrash, which was a form of Scribal College intended for those who were desirous of prosecuting their studies and becoming teachers of the Law.

In these colleges the great Rabbis taught. Such a college Paul attended; “I am a Jew,” he said, “born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city [Jerusalem] at the feet of Gamaliel, instructed according to

¹ *Jewish Social Life in the Days of Christ*, p. 137.

the strict manner of the law of our fathers" (Acts 22³). The expression "at the feet of" is literally correct, for the disciples squatted on the floor while their teacher sat upon a raised dais. It was used as a reproach against our Lord that He had never attended one of these Rabbinical Colleges. "Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan?" jeered the Jews (Jn. 8⁴⁸), for the epithet was a nickname which they had for one who had never sat at the feet of the Rabbis. So others wondered at Christ's teaching, saying, "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" (Jn. 7¹⁵), an expression equivalent to the phrase to-day "being unqualified." Nevertheless our Lord did once sit in the House of the Midrash at Jerusalem, namely, on the memorable occasion when He attended the Passover at the age of twelve (Lk. 2⁴⁶).

CHILDREN'S GAMES IN PALESTINE.

"The streets of the city," said Zechariah (8⁵), "shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof." So our Lord noticed the children sitting in the market-places and calling to their fellows: "We piped unto you, and ye did not dance; we wailed, and ye did not mourn" (Mt. 11^{16, 17}, Lk. 7³²). There they were, playing imitative games of marriages and funerals, just as our British boys and girls play at "horses" or "trains" to-day.

These games of imitation are most popular in the East. During the War military processions were all the rage,

and continually one saw boys parading with tin cans and other mock paraphernalia in the manner of the soldiers. "Pavement" games with pebbles are also indulged in by Eastern children to-day. As the excavations of the Palestine Exploration Society have found lime-stone slabs marked out in the manner of draught boards, and pebbles shaped like counters, it is to be presumed that these roadside games played on a chalked-out ground are relics of ancient custom.

The New Testament apocryphal "Gospel of Thomas," tells of the boy Jesus playing with other children and modelling birds in clay. Dismissing the miraculous endowment of the clay birds with life, it is still to be presumed that the picture of children thus engaged is a piece of true local colour. Nevertheless, pious Jews forbade the making of any image of living creatures, on the ground that it transgressed the second commandment.

Country boys, especially those living in a relatively bracing place like Nazareth, which stood high, would find recreation in climbing and other field sports. Slinging and archery were certainly popular pastimes in Old Testament days, though there is no reference to them in the Gospels. But that Jesus as a boy was a lover of the country is abundantly borne out in His parables.

The towns had their Roman gymnasia and stadia. These, however, were forbidden to the stricter Jews on account of their pagan association. Even the childish imitation of the Roman games was not allowed.

THE LANGUAGE OF JESUS.

The mother-tongue of Jesus was Aramaic, a dialect closely akin to Hebrew. This was the language of the common people, and Jesus used the same tongue, not only in youth, but all through His life, for there is little doubt that He spoke Aramaic in daily intercourse with His disciples and in His public ministry. A few of His original expressions have come down to us, such as *Talitha cumi*, "Damsel, arise" (Mk. 5⁴¹), the words with which Jesus wakened the daughter of Jairus from the sleep of death; *Ephphatha*, "Be opened" (Mk. 7³⁴), which our Lord used when He cured the man who was deaf and dumb; and the most sacred instance of all, the cry upon the Cross, *Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?* "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Mk. 15³⁴). That only these three Aramaic expressions were preserved may possibly be explained by the fact that "they were associated with moments of exceptional emotion on Christ's part, and therefore felt to be exceptionally precious. The cry upon the Cross was peculiarly a cry *de profundis*. In the case of the deaf and dumb man, Christ, for some reason or other, was unwontedly moved, for it is said that 'He looked up to heaven and sighed.' And, though it is not stated, the spectacle of Jairus's child-daughter lying cold, yet beautiful in death, was calculated to touch profoundly the heart of the great Child-Lover."¹ Differences of dialect no doubt existed in the common tongue. On

¹ J. Young, "Language of Christ," Hastings' *DOG*,

the night of the betrayal Peter conversed in the vernacular with the servants and those assembled round the fire, but he was recognized as a Galilean by his pronunciation which was different from that of the Judæans.

Hebrew, at the time of Christ, was the language of students and of the synagogue, and even in the synagogue an interpreter was employed to translate into the vernacular for the benefit of the common people the portions of the Scriptures read in the public services. In His childhood our Lord knew Hebrew no more than the others, but we may believe that He studied it in the rolls of the synagogue or in copies of the Scriptures which He possessed, and made Himself master of the ancient tongue in which the sacred history of His people was written. Greek He almost certainly knew. "He would have the same chance of learning it as a boy born in the Scottish Highlands has of learning English, 'Galilee of the Gentiles' being then full of Greek-speaking inhabitants." Greek was the language of commerce and of literature, and was spoken in the seaports and along the highways of commerce. In Jerusalem itself, Greek must have been more or less familiar owing to the number of Hellenistic Jews who came up from all parts of the world to attend the feasts, and in some cases to spend their last days in the Holy City, and be buried in the "land of Israel." We can hardly doubt, then, that Jesus knew and could use Greek when occasion required—with Pilate, for example, or with the Greeks who sought an interview with Him in the last week of His life.

The following articles also bear upon this section :

- Roman Administration, vol. iii. p. 30.
- The Herod Family, vol. iii. p. 34.
- A Fellahin Home in Palestine, vol. iii. p. 80.
- Nazareth, vol. iii. p. 135.
- Childhood in the East, vol. i. p. 273.
- Wild Honey, vol. i. p. 247
- Locusts, vol. ii. p. 277.
- Dreams, vol. ii. p. 5.

THE ROMANS IN PALESTINE.

ROMAN ADMINISTRATION.

At the time of our Lord the Roman Empire was divided into provinces, of which there were two kinds: Senatorial and Imperial. The former was governed by a proconsul (cf. Acts 18¹²), who was responsible to the Senate. He was therefore a civil ruler, and the province was unarmed. Imperial provinces were ruled by Imperial Legates, who were military officers carrying military insignia and wearing military uniform. These came to their provinces at the head of their legions. Over the latter provinces the Emperor held unlimited power, and because they were thus subject to martial law, it was customary to assign the more turbulent territories to the Imperial group. Syro-Cilicia-Phoenice was a joint-province of this class.

But no territory was necessarily a permanent member of either group or province. Exchanges between Senate and Emperor were not infrequent, and when danger threatened from insurrection or attack from

outside, a Senatorial province might be taken under the military control of the Emperor. It is therefore a test of accuracy in contemporary literature whether these changes are correctly noted. Thus Luke refers to Sergius Paulus as proconsul of Cyprus (Acts 13⁷), which he was at the time of Paul's visit, though before and afterwards Cyprus was an Imperial province. Achaia went through similar changes.

Both proconsuls and legates were attended by lictors. These were officials who executed the orders of the magistrate, especially when force was required, such as the clearing of the way before him or the dispersion of crowds. When any person failed to pay proper respect to a dignified functionary, he ordered his lictor to "mark" the offender, that is, to censure and punish him. The lictors carried as their symbols of office a bundle of rods (*fascies*), with an axe placed in the middle, to indicate that the magistrate had the power to scourge and put to death any who disobeyed his commands. Doubtless the exhibition of such insignia of power was the most disagreeable picture of the Roman administration in the eyes of a proud but conquered people.

Judæa was not strictly a province. At the time of our Lord's birth it was part of the dominion of Herod the Great, but after Herod's death the Roman Emperor assumed the right to settle the dispute which had arisen in Herod's family, and partitioned Palestine more or less arbitrarily among his three sons. Judæa fell to Archelaus, who was deposed in A.D. 6, his petty kingdom thereafter coming directly under Roman rule and being

administered by a procurator or governor of the equestrian order. This was a class of society inundated with liberated slaves and persons who, perhaps by disreputable means, had succeeded in raising the required sum of money which was the status of admission. Pilate affords an example of this type.

Governors were usually changed every year. The Emperor Tiberius, however, retained many governors for a number of years in one position, and he also instituted a system of payment by salary, thereby removing the pernicious system by which an official recouped himself by taxation. The Roman administration was also sufficiently elastic to permit of governors being appointed temporarily for some specific purpose, and it is probable that P. Sulpicius Quirinius, who was "governor of Syria" in A.D. 6-9 (Lk. 2²), held his office in this way.

In Palestine, local law was allowed to persist to a great extent, and the Sanhedrin was recognized as official. Its powers were strictly limited to Judæa, but it was allowed to exercise a good deal of authority in Galilee and Samaria. It could not inflict capital punishment, but it had the right to arrest persons and inflict imprisonment and flogging. The synagogue courts were also allowed to continue under Roman rule, and to deal with petty offences. Jews, however, who were admitted to the privilege of Roman citizenship were free from these jurisdictions, hence the illegality of many of the persecutions which Paul endured.

The Roman administration was costly. The Army

and the Navy had to be kept up ; the Civil Service had to be maintained ; the great gladiatorial and allied entertainments which were executed on a scale of the most profuse extravagance had to be paid for, and, as often happened, immense doles were needed in times of famine. All these expenses were borne very largely by the conquered provinces. To meet these disbursements customs were levied at city gates and quays ; there were tolls on roads and bridges ; there were harbour dues, land taxes, and poll taxes ; in short, all the devices for raising money which a great Imperial government exercises to-day.

Though the word "Romans" appears only once in the Gospels (Jn. 11⁴⁸), these people form a very real presence in the narrative of our Lord's life, and act, more or less constantly, as a background to the scenes that are described. Thus the influence of the world-power of Rome is seen in such references as that to the tribute money due to Cæsar (Mt. 22¹⁷ etc.) ; to the universal taxation under Augustus (Lk. 2¹), to the reference to the Emperor in Jn. 19¹² ; to the extortions of the official tax-gatherers (see art. p. 38) ; and to the presence in the country of the Roman soldiery.

The keynote of Roman government was tolerance. When they occupied a conquered territory they adopted, as far as possible, the system of administration which they found ; they took no pains to change the language of the people ; and, so far from attempting religious proselytizing, they were prepared always to admit any deity to their own Pantheon. Thus they went to

Greece and identified Jupiter with Zeus. In Syria they found him in Baal; in Egypt he was accepted in the form of Amun. But the Jews, as a whole, refused these pacific overtures. A small section of them, known as the Sadducees, welcomed the Roman civilization just as they had welcomed Greek culture, but the mass of the people turned from Rome with a hatred which they made no attempt to disguise. Led by fanatics more intolerant than the most vindictive revolutionists of to-day, they resisted the Roman government until the catastrophe of A.D. 70 involved the whole of Judæa in a final ruin.

THE HEROD FAMILY.

For more than two and a half centuries the fortunes of Judæa were in the hands of two distinguished families—the Hasmonæans and the family of Herod. Judas Maccabæus, the third son of Mattathias the priest, came into power in 167 B.C., and the dynasty thus founded was sustained for about 120 years. Then it was transferred by the favour of Cæsar to Antipater, an Idumæan, who was granted the privilege of Roman citizenship. Soon afterwards Antipater committed the administration of Galilee to his second son Herod, afterwards known as “The Great.”

Rome, at this time, was not in a position to take over the full control of Palestine, but it supported Herod, recognizing his outstanding abilities. It was after the kaleidoscopic changes which resulted from the assassination of Antipater that Herod was appointed king of

Judæa by vote of the Senate. Rome then recognized his services to the Empire by establishing him at Jerusalem by force of arms.

Recognizing that he held the reins of power through the goodwill of the Romans, Herod never failed to cultivate their friendship in every possible way, but in doing so he alienated the Jews, who still clung to their hopes of a Jewish restoration. In vain did Herod court Jewish popularity by concessions to their religion, or by the munificence of his gifts. He built them a magnificent temple, but over it he placed the Roman Eagle. He offered sacrifices to Yahweh, but he also encouraged the pagan cults by the erection of temples dedicated to Augustus. He gave the people wonderful theatres, hippodromes, and amphitheatres, but at the same time he filled the streets of the cities with mercenary bullies. He even made generous provision from his own means in times of famine, and remitted taxation at periods of distress, but never did he succeed in arousing any permanently cordial response in the hearts of the people. Under his government Judæa became the greatest of all the Eastern kingdoms allied with Rome, but he made no secret of the fact that he did not love and never could love the Jews; he is said to have openly announced that he cared less for them than for his heathen subjects.

His great political success and the eminence to which he rose should have made Herod happy as well as great. But the suspicious, crafty, ruthless tyrant who rises before our imagination as we read the opening to the First Gospel was manifestly a stranger to happiness.

His life was a record of heartlessness, and the murder of his wife Mariamne, a woman whom he seemed really to love, but whom he slew in a fit of jealousy, was but one of many similar crimes which stained his reign. It seemed to be his firm determination that no man should be honoured in his kingdom except himself, and the story of the Massacre of the Innocents, following upon his crafty and treacherous attempts to learn the whereabouts of the "newborn King," reads as a piece of accurate local colour.

At his death Herod's kingdom was divided among his three sons. Archelaus was given Judæa and Idumæa; Antipas obtained Galilee and Peræa; and to Philip were given Batanæa, Trachonitis, and Auranitis.

Archelaus, as befitted the eldest son, had the greatest prize. He is considered to be the nobleman referred to in the parable of the Pounds (Lk. 19^{12ff.}), for at his father's death he went to Italy to obtain the consent of Rome to his receiving and administering the kingdom left to him under Herod's will. During his absence the Jews revolted and sent an embassy to oppose him. The Emperor, however, confirmed the appointment though with the title Ethnarch instead of king.

The rebellion in Jerusalem resulted in the death of some 3000 Jews, most of whom were pilgrims visiting the Holy City for the Passover. Thus at the beginning of his reign an evil reputation was gained by Archelaus, which accounts for the alarm of Joseph: "But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judæa in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither"

(Mt. 2²²), another touch of true local colour. Archelaus, however, had a very brief career ; he was deposed and banished in the ninth or tenth year of his reign.

Antipas, the second son, had better fortune, for he kept his seat until the year 39. He ruled with the title of Tetrarch, and it was in his territory that the boyhood of Jesus and the greater part of His public ministry were spent. The appellation of "fox" given to Antipas by Jesus (Lk. 13³²) affords a clue to his nature, for he was crafty rather than strong. His marriage with Herodias, regarded by the Jews as incestuous, appears to have been the principal factor in causing the execution of John the Baptist. It was in the presence of Antipas that Jesus kept so contemptuous a silence (Lk. 23⁸⁻⁹). The end of Herod Antipas came eventually through the ambition of Herodias in seeking from the Emperor Caligula a royal title, for the request led to inquiries and suspicions which resulted in their banishment. Herod's tetrarchy was then given to Agrippa I., the grandson of Herod the Great by the Hasmonæan Mariamne.

Philip was the son of Herod and of Cleopatra of Jerusalem. His character and his good fortune gave him a long and peaceful rule. There is only one reference to him in the Gospels, namely, Lk. 3¹, where he is spoken of as Tetrarch of Ituræa and of the region of Trachonitis, both outlying districts. The Philip referred to in Mt. 14³ and Mk. 6¹⁷, as being the first husband of Herodias, was a son of Herod the Great by Mariamne.

THE PUBLICANS.

It was the custom of the Romans to put up the position of tax-collector to auction, the highest bidder being appointed. Applicants were usually members of the equestrian order, to which admission was obtained by the possession of 400,000 sesterces, or something over £3300 of English money. It was a class therefore inundated with the "new rich," in itself a factor contributing to the contempt with which tax-gatherers were regarded. The persons thus engaged were called "publicans," a name also given to subordinates whom they often employed for the actual collection of the dues, who, in turn, might purchase their positions in hopes of "feathering their own nests." Naturally the abuses which this system occasioned were very terrible, especially as governors of provinces could be bribed to wink at undue extortion, so that it is actually recorded that in one year in Asia the taxes were collected three times.

In Judæa the taxes were collected on behalf of the Imperial treasury, but in Galilee they went to Herod Antipas the Tetrarch. At the gates of towns and cities sat the tax-gatherer, who assessed the value of commodities and levied a proportionate toll. Such were Matthew (Mt. 9⁹) and Zacchæus (Lk. 19²). The power of the official to make an improper assessment is clearly brought out in the confession of Zacchæus, "If I have wrongfully exacted aught of any man, I restore fourfold."

That a Jew should thus associate himself with the oppression of his countrymen was a natural reason for the hatred with which the publicans were regarded. In Palestine, however, there were additional reasons which made their occupation hateful and their characters degraded. They were required to take an oath of allegiance to the Emperor, to whom sacrifice was offered twice daily in the temples. For, following upon the style of the ancient monarchies of the East, the Roman Emperors assumed the attributes of divinity. Thus in an inscription referring to the celebration of the Emperor's birthday, *circa* 10 B.C., which was found in Asia Minor, the Cæsar is described as "The Saviour of the Human Race," "sent by Providence," while the day itself is declared to be the "birthday of the god." Little wonder, then, that the lawfulness of paying tribute to such a man was incessantly disputed in the Jewish schools. Thus the acceptance of the tax-gatherer's office became a religious offence, and common talk associated it not only with the Gentiles but with harlots and with "sinners," a word of the deepest contempt. Tax-gatherers were accordingly driven out of respectable society. A promise made to them was declared to be no more binding than one made to a criminal. Their money was polluted, and charitable offerings known to have come from them to the synagogue or the Temple were not accepted. Their evidence was not considered valid in the Jewish law courts, and intercourse with them was forbidden by the stricter Jews.

THE COINS OF THE GOSPELS.

In a country like Palestine, which had been tossed about like a ball among the great Powers of the world, and which lay on the main highway between Asia and Egypt, the coinage in circulation was naturally very diversified. But for the purposes of this article only those actually mentioned in the Gospels will be described and explained.

The smallest coin was the Greek *lepton*, the "mite" (Mk. 12⁴²). The word is derived from the adjective meaning "thin" or "small," and the coin thus designated appears to have been worth about a quarter of an English farthing. The "uttermost farthing" of Mt. 5²⁶ was a Roman coin of the value of two lepta, and was called a *quadrans*. This fact is full of significance in its relation to the widow's gift, since in her penury she cast in all she had. Easily might she have retained at any rate one lepton. As it was, she gave the two. The references in Mt. 10²⁹ and Lk. 12⁶, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing," probably designate the *assarion*, a coin worth a little less than a halfpenny.

In Mt. 17²⁷ our Lord bids Peter look for a *shekel* in a fish's mouth. This was the Phœnician "tetradrachm," and was equivalent to about four shillings and twopence of our present money. In Mt. 17²⁴ the tax which was owing by our Lord is mentioned as being a *half shekel*, which was a rare Phœnician piece known as the "*didrachm*." It was accordingly usual for two persons to join forces in paying the Temple tax, and to offer

payment with the tetradrachm (Kennedy). This coin was also the unit of the "thirty pieces of silver" paid to the traitor Judas.

The "ten pieces of silver" possessed by the woman in Lk. 15⁸ are generally considered to have been drachmæ. The *drachma* was, and still is, the unit of the Greek system of silver coinage. Ten of these coins would be worth about eight shillings. Married women to-day in the East wear such coins upon their head-dress, where they have a significance somewhat akin to the Western wedding ring.

The most frequently mentioned coin in the Gospels is the *denarius*, translated "penny" in our English version, but more correctly "shilling" in American revisions. It is the name of the most important Roman coin that circulated throughout the Empire, and in terms of which all public accounts were kept. Thus in Mk. 14⁵ the vase of ointment is valued at 300 denarii (about £12). In the parable of the Vineyard (Mt. 20²), the denarius is considered to be adequate payment for a day's work. In the parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk. 10³⁵), two denarii are given to the innkeeper as reasonable payment for the keep of a wounded traveller for a day or two.

A typical denarius with which the Roman taxes were paid in our Lord's day (Mt. 22¹⁹) would have on its front or obverse the head of the Emperor with the superscription, "Tiberius Cæsar divi Augusti filius Augustus"—"Tiberius Cæsar, the son of the deified Augustus (himself) Augustus." On the back or reverse

was the figure of a woman holding in her right hand a sceptre, and in her left a flower. This was Livia, the widow of Augustus. The inscription on this side of the coin read "Pontifex Maximus," or "High Priest," a title first assumed by Augustus. These two inscriptions, the one acknowledging the Emperor as a god, and the other recognizing him as possessing priestly powers, were peculiarly obnoxious to the Jews, and on this account the Imperial government issued a special coinage for Palestine bearing the name of the Emperor and his effigy, but without these blasphemous symbols. The coin could be minted only by the Imperial authority and not by the authority of the Senate. It therefore belonged to Cæsar in a particular sense.

In the parable of the Pounds (Lk. 19^{12ff.}) the unit is the *mina*. It was not necessarily an actual coin, but was a specific sum used in calculation. It contained 100 denarii and was worth about £4. It was the sixtieth part of a *talent*, which, again, was not a coin but the name of the highest unit of weight. The talent contained 6000 drachms, and its value was about £240. This sum is twice mentioned by our Lord, namely, in the parable of the Unmerciful Servant (Mt. 18^{23ff.}) and in the parable of the Talents (Mt. 25^{14ff.}).

"It is not always realized," says Dr. A. R. S. Kennedy, "how vast was the difference in the amounts owing in the parable of the Unmerciful Servant. The one servant owed 100 denarii, the other 10,000 talents or 60,000,000 denarii. The one debt, occupying little more space than 100 sixpences, could be carried in the

pocket; for the payment of the other, an army of nearly 8600 carriers, each with a sack 60 lb. in weight, would be required. If these were placed in single file, a yard apart, the train would be about 5 miles in length."

JEWISH ORDERS AT THE TIME OF OUR LORD.

THE PHARISEES.

The Pharisaic movement was the outcome of the long conflict between Judaism and the surrounding heathenism, the climax of which was reached when the Maccabean princes fought for religious and civil liberty. Towards the close of this national struggle a theocratic group, known as the *Chasīdīm* or "Holy Men," withdrew from the Sadducee Court party under John Hyrcanus (135-105 B.C.) and set up for themselves a special standard of ceremonial purity. They became then a fraternity containing four degrees or orders, and were given the name Pharisee or "separated."

The ordinary Pharisee belonged to the lowest of these four orders, to which he was admitted on taking the necessary vows and serving a novitiate for one year. He bound himself to observe the principles of tithing as detailed in Num. 18²¹⁻²⁴, Lev. 27³⁰⁻³³ etc., and to avoid all Levitical uncleanness. The family of one who took the vows was regarded as belonging to the fraternity, and any one who married into that family was obliged to seek admission into the order. The social effects of

admission are thus summed up by Dr. Edersheim : “ The general obligations of a ‘ Chaber ’ (companion of the order) towards those that were ‘ without ’ the fraternity were as follows. He was neither to buy from, nor to sell to, him anything, either in a dry or a fluid state ; he was neither to eat at his table (as he might thus partake of what had not been tithed), nor to admit him to his table, unless he had put on the garments of a ‘ Chaber ’ (as his own old ones might else have carried defilement) ; nor to go into any burying-place ; nor to give ‘ therumah ’ or tithes to any priest who was not a member of the fraternity ; nor to do anything in the presence of an ‘ am ha-arez,’ or non-‘ Chaber,’ which brought up points connected with the laws of purification, etc. To these, other ordinances, partly of an ascetic character, were added at a later period. But what is specially remarkable is that not only was a novitiate required for the higher grades, similar to that on first entering the order ; but that, just as the garment of a non-‘ Chaber ’ defiled a ‘ Chaber ’ of the first degree, that of the latter equally defiled him of the second degree, and so on.”¹

A Pharisee in New Testament days might be identified in various ways as he appeared in any public place.

(a) *His Punctiliousness at Prayer Time.*

Like the modern Muslim, the Pharisee paid no heed to his immediate surroundings when the hour of prayer

¹ *Jewish Social Life in the Days of Christ*, p. 236.

arrived. If the time had come, he would stop short in the middle of the road or amid the tumult of the market-place and render himself conspicuous by his loud-spoken devotions. Nothing was suffered to interrupt this pious duty, while a lengthy prayer was considered to be more effective than a short one. "Much prayer," said the old Pharisaic proverb, "is sure to be heard." And, as each invocation included a benediction of the Divine Name, there came to be a special religious merit in the actual number of repetitions (cf. Mt. 67).

(b) *The Wearing of the Tephillin or Phylacteries.*

Among the charges brought by our Lord against the Pharisees was, "They make broad their phylacteries" (Mt. 23⁵). The word is Greek with the significance of "amulet," so that the Hebrew name "tephillin," which is the plural of the ordinary word for "prayer," and was the name given by the Jews, conveys a more correct meaning. For the phylacteries were and are worn at prayer in literal obedience to the command in Exod. 13^{9, 10} and Deut. 6⁸ and 11¹⁸. They were square boxes or cases measuring "two finger-breadths" and made from the skin of a ceremonially clean animal. One box was worn on the forehead, and one on the right arm.

That worn on the head contained four divisions in which were placed tiny rolls of parchment tied with white hairs from the tail of a cow or calf. On these rolls were inscribed with special ink Exod. 13^{1-10, 11-16}, Deut. 6⁴⁻⁹, 11¹³⁻²¹. The case worn on the arm was

single, and contained the same four passages written on one piece of parchment, but in four separate columns. Straps were attached to the phylacteries to enable them to be fastened in position, and when these were "laid," as the term was, the knot of the head strap was made to simulate the Hebrew letter "daleth," the knot of the arm strap to form the letter "yod," while on each box was inscribed the letter "shin"; these three letters together made the sacred word (without vowels) "Shaddai" or "Almighty."

The wearing of phylacteries at prayer time by the modern Jew is a survival of the ancient custom. The Pharisees wore them at all times, irrespective of the hours of worship, and also affected larger sizes than were really necessary. They attached the greatest importance to them, and their attitude led at length to the most extravagant adulation of their religious efficacy. "They were considered to be significant of the wisdom, reason, and greatness of God. Phylacteries were more holy than the gold plate worn by the High Priest, since that contained the Divine Name once, the phylacteries twenty-three times. The Mishna taught that 'he who has Tephillin on his head and his arm, Tsitsith on his garment, and Mezuzah on his door, has every possible guarantee that he will not sin.' The wearing of them distinguished the cultured and pious from the common mass, the *am-ha'arez*, the 'people who knew not the law' (Jn. 7⁴⁹)."¹

¹ J. T. L. Maggs, "Phylacteries," Hastings' *DCG*.

(c) *The Constant Wearing of the Sacred Fringes.*

"The Pharisees," said Christ, "enlarge the borders of their garments" (Mt. 23⁵). This border or "fringe" was worn by the pious Jew as a memorial in literal obedience to the command in Deut. 22¹²: "Thou shalt make thee fringes upon the four borders of thy vesture," a ruling repeated in a slightly different form in Num. 15^{37, 38}, where it is prescribed that they be of blue, the symbolic colour of the covenant. These fringes are referred to several times in the New Testament; cf. Mt. 9²⁰ 14³⁶ 23⁵, Mk. 6⁵⁶, Lk. 8⁴⁴.

The "twisted cords" of Deut. 22¹² were apparently intended to be fastened to the four corners of the outer garment, while the Priestly Code called for a "tassel" to be attached to the cord. In New Testament days the outer robe was worn like the Roman "pallium," the loose end being thrown over the left shoulder. The tassel attached to this corner could then be easily reached from behind, as in the case of the woman with the issue of blood (Mt. 9²⁰).

The Pharisees were held in high esteem among the people, and might almost be regarded as a people's party. At first they were progressive, and even conducted a missionary propaganda (Mt. 23¹⁵); but conservatism of a rigid kind ultimately enfeathered them, and they became noted for their stereotyped version of Judaism. Nevertheless the best type of Jewish character and piety was found amongst their number. They devoted themselves to the duties of preaching and

teaching. They were the life and soul of the synagogue and the scholastic system of their day, and by their loyalty to the ancient faith they undoubtedly prepared the way for the work of our Lord.

The following articles should also be consulted :

The Sadducees, vol. iii. p. 48.

The Synagogue, vol. iii. p. 62.

The Sabbath, vol. iii. p. 67.

The Washing of Hands, vol. iii. p. 76.

THE SADDUCEES.

A commonly accepted derivation of the word Sad-
ducee is from the name of Zadok, who was a notable priest in the time of David and Solomon. His descendants were regarded by Ezekiel as the only legitimate priests. But whatever was the origin of the name, it is known to have designated a priestly party with a strong political bias which came into being at the time of the Maccabees.

From the beginning of the Grecian period of Jewish history, and even before that time, the whole conduct of political affairs was in the hands of the priestly aristocracy. Owing to the close association of "Church and State," it was inevitable that the priests should be steeped in politics ; and, as it is in the nature of most politicians to seek personal advancement rather than the well-being of the State, it came about that the more influential priests stepped over to the side of their conquerors, in order to enjoy pride of place and security

of tenure. The priesthood, drifting apart from the people, became callous in its outlook, and the Sadducee party was distinguished by its selfishness and its indifference to the public weal.

It is important to note that no one could be a Sadducee unless he was a member of one of the high priestly or aristocratic families. There was as much difference between a Sadducee priest and an ordinary priest as between a priest and a layman. This fact alone explains why they came so little in contact with our Lord. They sat in the Sanhedrin which condemned Him, and occasionally condescended to jeer at His teaching (Mt. 16¹ 22²³). But, for the most part, they considered this humble Galilean Peasant to be beneath their notice. There is no record of a Sadducee ever having been admitted into the Christian Church; Sadducees had no independent existence apart from Jerusalem and its Temple, and with the fall of the Jewish State they disappear from history.

The distinctive doctrines of the Sadducees were negative rather than positive. They seemed to have no particular theological system of their own, but stood in opposition to the Pharisees chiefly on four counts: they denied the Pharisaic doctrine of the bodily resurrection (Mt. 22²³, Mk. 12¹⁸, Lk. 20²⁷, Acts 23⁸); they renounced the Messianic hope; they scoffed at the existence of angels and spirits (Acts 23⁸); and they denied the fact of a Divine Providence shaping human destiny.

THE SCRIBES.

The scribes were a class of learned Jews who devoted themselves to the study, copying, and exposition of the Law. They are variously called "scribe," "lawyer," "doctor," and "Rabbi" in the New Testament, though the last, meaning "my master," did not develop into a title until after the time of Christ.

In New Testament days the scribes were held in profoundest honour, and to their pupils they even ranked higher than a parent. Wherever they went they were accorded the greatest respect. They sat in the Sanhedrin; they occupied the front seats in the synagogue; at private or public feasts they were given the highest places; they were greeted in the streets with the most reverent salutations. To marry a Rabbi's daughter, to carry a Rabbi's burden, to fetch water for him, or to load his ass was regarded as a privilege. "A man," said the Jews, "should help a Rabbi in need, feed him, clothe him, redeem him from slavery, sooner than even his own father." The Rabbis, they declared, were the "wise men of Israel"; they were honoured by Yahweh in a particular manner; their praises were acclaimed by the angels, and in heaven they would retain that exalted rank which distinguished them upon earth.

The profession of scribe was supposed to be honorary, and, if a scribe had no private means, he gained a livelihood by the exercise of some trade. But, though no fees may have been charged, there is no doubt that

presents were given, and one may imagine that, with the casuistic mind of the Pharisee, this system was capable of considerable development. For there was a secular side to the profession. "The Rabbi circumcised the babe, instructed the boy, drew up marriage settlements, and prepared the deeds for purchases and sales, for loans and agreements, and such-like public transactions." As these duties involved technical knowledge of what we should call civil law, it is more than questionable if the theory of honorary work was always adhered to.

Jerusalem was naturally the chief seat of the scribes (Mt. 15¹⁵, Mk. 3²²), but they were met with in every place where the Jews settled. They were divided at the time of our Lord into two schools, those of Hillel and Shammai. Both schools had their headquarters in Jerusalem. The school of Hillel was distinguished for its liberal view of the Law, that of Shammai for its rigidity. Both Pharisees and Sadducees were found in these schools, though the scribes were inevitably drawn more from the former than from the latter division of Jewish society. Some have doubted whether there were Sadducee scribes, but the expressions in Mk. 2¹⁶ (R.V.) and Lk. 5³⁰ (R.V.) seem to show that there were other scribes besides those of the Pharisees.

The scribes first come into view at the time of the Restoration. In Neh. 8-10 there is given an account of the reading of the great Covenant by Ezra, and the sealing of it by the people. The Law thus re-established required those who could expound it, and at

first this duty devolved chiefly upon the priests. But the Law had not merely to be read, it had to be copied, and the latter duty fell to those who were skilled in writing. Then, as time went on, the higher duties of interpretation were added to the purely literary labour, until the profession of scribe became more esteemed than that of priest, and the scribes became the real teachers of the people, and dominated their whole spiritual life.

The Jews recognized no vital distinction between civil and religious law. It therefore happened that the scribes were constantly required to decide what we should term secular matters by the standard of an ecclesiastical code. And, just as in modern times the decision of a judge becomes an established precedent, afterwards to be quoted as authoritative, so the decisions and maxims of the Rabbis were transmitted orally, and used convincingly in any argument. A good memory was therefore essential to a scribe. The method of tuition was by constant verbal repetition, and the pupils were carefully enjoined never to teach anything which they had not received from the lips of their own master. When, therefore, any critical point came to be debated, the crux of the matter was usually decided by the apt quotation of a precedent, and the quotation of a verse from the Scriptures, whether it was really apposite or not, or the sudden appeal to some traditional authority capped the argument. When any case was presented for which no provision seemed to be made, the scribes would settle the difficulty by analogy. Thus all matters

of conduct resolved themselves into what was lawful and what was forbidden. This arrangement was called "binding and loosing," that is, "to bind" was "to forbid," and "to loose" meant "to permit" (cf. Mt. 16¹⁹).

For purposes of instruction and of debate there were special "houses of teaching" set apart, where the Rabbi sat upon a raised dais, and his disciples upon the floor. In Jerusalem lectures were delivered in the Temple. The synagogue, however, was the chief medium for propaganda, and the Scripture exposition which formed so important a part of the synagogue worship usually devolved upon a scribe, if one were present in the congregation (see art. SYNAGOGUE, p. 62).

THE ZEALOTS.

In the lists of the Apostles given in Lk. 6¹⁵ and Acts 1¹³ Simon is referred to as "the Zealot."

Dr. Edersheim says that the Nationalist party of the Jews designated by the term "Zealots" first appeared as guerilla bands which traversed Galilee under the leadership of one Ezekias, *circa* 44 B.C. Josephus calls them "robbers," but a far different estimate of these men obtained in Jerusalem, and, when their leader was executed by Herod the Great, the Sanhedrin called him to question in the matter. Nevertheless, Herod held the Nationalists under an iron subjection during his reign, though when he died, and there came the civil war which followed upon the accession of Archelaus,

the standard of the Nationalists was again raised in Galilee. Then Judas, the son of Ezekias, took the lead, armed a following, and instigated a general rising throughout Palestine, a rising not put down without considerable loss of life. Jozar, the High Priest at the time, threw in his lot with the Nationalist party, but, because he advocated submission to the taxing of Quirinius, Judas and his followers broke away from him, and carried on their fanatical and unavailing resistance to the Herod administration until four of the family of Ezekias had suffered martyrdom.

Josephus calls these zealots the "fourth sect of Jewish Philosophy," and says, "These men agree in all things with the Pharisaic notions; but they have an inviolable attachment to liberty, and say that God is to be their only Ruler and Lord." Obedience to Rome, they taught, was inimical to God's law. At all costs, therefore, the yoke must be broken, and fortune, life, and family possessions all were to be thrown away if demanded in the struggle. Dr. Edersheim suggests that the object of the Pharisees and Herodians, when they tried to trap our Lord on the question of the payment of tribute (Mk. 12^{13ff.}), was to involve Him with this Nationalist party, and so quickly bring about His ruin.

JEWISH INSTITUTIONS AND
OBSERVANCES.

HEROD'S TEMPLE.

It was in the eighteenth year of his reign (20 B.C.) that Herod the Great obtained the permission of his suspicious subjects to rebuild the Temple of Zerubbabel. The most sacred portions were built by a thousand priests wearing sacerdotal garments, and they and the ordinary workmen received special preparation for their task. A definite area was laid out for the outer court, which was enclosed by a battlemented wall pierced by four gates on the west side, two on the south side, one on the north, and one on the east, the last being identified with the "Beautiful Gate" of Acts 3². An immense bridge leading from the city to the Temple opened out on the south-west corner. On the inner side this great wall was built as a sort of cloister with a double row of pillars supporting a roof of wood. These cloisters or porticoes were called *porches*, and the Eastern side of the colonnade was known as "Solomon's Porch" (Jn. 10²³, Acts 3¹¹ 5¹²), because it belonged to an earlier building, which tradition had assigned to that king. Along the south wall the colonnade was called the "Royal Porch," and here the portico consisted of four rows of marble columns of the Corinthian order, each a monolith 50 ft. in height.

The outer court thus bounded was called the *Court of the Gentiles*; it was not considered to be really a part

of the Temple, and therefore was not sacred. Any one was free to enter, and in our Lord's day the scene within it must have presented a pandemonium. There the sacrificial animals were sold in open market; there were set up the tables of the money-changers (for only certain coins were accepted by the priests); and there, too, were held all kinds of public meetings, so that it was a sort of "Hyde Park Corner." It is to this outer court that reference is made in Mt. 21¹²⁻¹⁶, Mk. 11^{15ff.}, Lk. 19^{45. 46}, Jn. 11¹³⁻¹⁷, and probably also in Acts 2^{46. 47}.

Leading from the Court of the Gentiles was a flight of steps which conducted the worshippers to the *Court of the Women*, so called, not because it was reserved for women, but because the women could not pass beyond it. This court was bounded by a low balustrade, entrance being obtained through three gates, one in the centre of the east side, and the other two in the north and south sides respectively. Over these gates were placed warning notices, one of which has since been found. It reads :

"No Gentile may enter within the balustrade and wall encircling the Temple. Whosoever is caught (doing so) will have to blame himself for the consequence—the death penalty."

It was the alleged violation of this law that Paul was charged with in the matter of Trophimus (Acts 21^{26ff.}).

The central gate was the *Gate of Nicanor*, made of dazzling brass, richly decorated, and requiring, so Josephus states, the united strength of twenty men to

open and close its leaves. Some authorities, it should be noted, consider this to be the "Beautiful Gate" of Acts 3².

In Mk. 12⁴¹⁻⁴⁴ and Lk. 21¹⁻⁴ there is related the incident of the widow casting her all into the "Treasury." Strictly the *Treasury* was in the next court, the "Court of the Israelites," where there were arranged thirteen chests for the various offerings. These receptacles were narrow at the mouth and wide at the bottom, and on that account were called "Trumpets." Dr. Eder-sheim suggests that Mt. 6², "When therefore thou doest alms, sound not a trumpet before thee," was an ironical allusion to the ostentatious giving in the Temple Treasury. The trumpet into which the widow cast her mite would be one devoted to the price of turtle-doves or young pigeons, which were sacrifices offered by women (cf. Lk. 2²⁴). These particular chests would therefore be placed for convenience in the Court of the Women, and the remainder in the Court of Israel.

In each of the four corners of the Court of the Women was an enclosure open to the sky. In one of these was piled the wood for the altar, and here those priests who were rendered unfit for their ordinary duties by reason of some temporary bodily blemish picked out and threw away the worm-eaten pieces. In another, the purified "lepers" washed before presenting themselves to the priests at the Gate of Nicanor. In the third, the Nazirites polled their hair and cooked their peace-offerings, while in the fourth were kept the wine and oil used in the drink-offering.

The Court of the Women communicated with the *Court of the Israelites* by a large gate and a flight of steps called the *Upper Gate*. At this gate all that was done "before the Lord" took place. Whoever had to be "presented" stood here: the women to be purified after childbirth, the cleansed leper, and others who wished to be free from the ceremonial taboo. It was at this gate that the aged Simeon took the infant Jesus in his arms and blessed Him (Lk. 2^{25ff.}). Here the "water of jealousy" was given to the suspected wife (Num. 5³⁰).

But the Court of Israel could also be approached directly from the Court of the Gentiles, six gates, three on each side, being provided. Several of these were reserved for special purposes, such as the "Fuel Gate," the "Gate of the First Born," and the "Corban Gate."

The court to which these gates gave entrance surrounded the *Court of the Priests*, so that it did not offer the open space in its centre which characterized the women's court. Round its sides were enclosures or chambers for the use of the officiating priests, a place for their vestments, a room for the preparation of the shewbread, the priestly bathrooms, store houses for salt, clean wood, etc.; enclosures for those animals which were awaiting sacrifice, chambers for the washing of the sacrificial meat, for the salting of the skins of the animals slain and sacrificed, as well as apartments for rest and meditation.

A balustrade and two steps separated the Court of Israel from the Court of the Priests. Round this court were arranged other chambers and enclosures for the

use of the priests. Of these the most notable may have been the *Hall of Hewn Stones*. Some authorities have questioned the placing of this Hall in the Priestly Court, for it was the meeting-place of the Sanhedrin, and included among its members, therefore, those who might not pass beyond the Court of Israel. But that laymen were admitted into the Court of the Priests is certain from the fact that the Law required certain offerers of sacrifice to lay their hands upon the offering at the moment when it was slain (see art. THE RITUAL OF SACRIFICE, vol. i. p. 119). W. O. E. Oesterley (art. TEMPLE, Hastings' *DCG*) challenges the placing of the Hall of Hewn Stones in the Priestly Court on the above grounds, but, at the same time, places therein the Hall of Assessors, where the Sanhedrin held a quasi-private sitting before the official meeting.

At this point the plan of the Temple building conforms more or less to that of the ancient Tabernacle, and the Priests' Court may be said to represent the outer court of the older building. It contained, therefore, the *Great Altar* and the *Laver*.

The former had a sloping pathway, called the "circuit," leading round it. At the top were three separate fires, one for flesh, one for incense, and the third for supplying the kindling. At each corner of the altar was a horn, that at one corner being hollow for the reception of the drink-offerings. Inside the altar was an ingenious system of drainage, the blood and refuse being swept down into the Kidron brook. Rings were fixed to the outside of the altar for the purpose of tying down the

sacrificial animals, and round the altar were placed marble tables for the cutting up of the flesh.

The Laver was of brass, and was supported by twelve colossal bulls. It was filled and emptied every day, great store cisterns being built in the Temple basement for the purpose.

The actual Temple or House of God was not large. It was, however, constructed of costly material—pure white marble covered with gold. Like the Tabernacle, it was built in two portions, the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies, the former being exactly twice the size of the latter. The roof was of cedar wood ornamented with golden spikes.

The entrance to the Holy Place was by a porchway where were stored gifts dedicated to the building, such as the golden candelabra of the proselyte Queen Adiabene, the two golden crowns presented by the Maccabees, and many other treasures. For the revenue of the Temple was immense, the priests exerting their influence to induce people to bequeath their money and property to it. It is possible that it was to this practice our Lord referred when He spoke of the scribes and Pharisees “devouring widows’ houses.”

The personnel of the Temple consisted of priests and Levites. The number was very large, so that they were divided into twenty-four groups or “courses,” each course taking duty in turn for a week at a time. Many of the priests, of course, lived in Jerusalem, but many also came in from the country. A rule was enforced that every priest who came up for his term of

office should arrive properly trimmed, washed, and dressed. Out of service there was no distinctive attire. The robes of office consisted of thin breeches, coats of chequer work, the indispensable girdle, and a turban. The dress was white and the linen thin. This, with the necessity of bare feet, is said to have been the cause of many of the priests getting chills.

The High Priest's robes were distinctive. He wore the ordinary priestly attire, but, in addition, there was the breastplate with the twelve jewels on it; the special mitre shaped like the inverted calyx of a flower; the golden forehead plate or "ziz" on which were graven the words "Holiness unto Yahweh"; and the embroidered ephod, apparently a sort of waistcoat of the kind still worn in the East.

No priestly dress was ever washed, but when soiled the garments were torn up and used as wicks for the Temple lamps. The High Priest's vestments, however, were hidden, not destroyed, and were renewed once a year.

The qualification for the priesthood was severe. Family history was very important, and the first inquiry by the Sanhedrin always related to the candidate's genealogy. If he failed to satisfy the court about his perfect legitimacy he was veiled in black and removed. If he passed this ordeal, he was examined for bodily defects, of which one hundred and forty were tabulated as permanent disqualifications and twenty-two as temporary. Those who stood the twofold test were dressed in white raiment and their names were entered

on a roll. According to Edersheim this is the allusion in Rev. 3⁵: "He that overcometh shall thus be arrayed in white garments: and I will in no wise blot his name out of the book of life."

The following articles also bear upon Herod's Temple:

The Tabernacle and its Furniture, vol. i. p. 111.

The Ritual of the Five Principal Offerings, vol. i. p. 118.

Priests and Levites, vol. i. p. 125.

The High Priest, vol. i. p. 129.

The Day of Atonement, vol. i. p. 133.

The Temple Hymn Book, vol. ii. p. 118.

Hebrew Music, vol. ii. p. 124.

The Third Lot, vol. iii. p. 7.

The Boy Jesus in the Temple, vol. iii. p. 21.

THE SYNAGOGUE.

The origin of the synagogue is not known. In Acts 15²¹ Peter is recorded as saying, "For Moses from generations of old hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath," a verse considered to point to at least a pre-Exilic institution, while the readiness with which the devout Jews met in assemblies during the Captivity suggests that it was not then an absolutely novel procedure.

The earliest Old Testament mention of the synagogue occurs in Ps. 74⁸, "They have burned up all the synagogues of God in the land." The closing century of the Persian rule (430-380 B.C.) is generally assigned as the period of the rise and development of the synagogue system as it is met with in the New Testament.

In the time of our Lord synagogues were found in practically every town or village where a Jewish population existed. Contemporary Jewish literature states that there was a synagogue in the Temple. Mention is made in the New Testament of synagogues at Nazareth, Capernaum, and Damascus, throughout Asia Minor, Macedonia, Greece, and the Islands, and in Rome. Philo says each city inhabited by Jews had its synagogue "for instruction in virtue and piety." The legendary narrative of 3 Macc. 7¹⁷⁻²⁰ tells of the founding of a synagogue at Ptolemais in Southern Egypt under Ptolemy iv. In Antioch in Syria there was the "Great Synagogue" to which the brazen vessels carried off from the Temple at Jerusalem by Antiochus Epiphanes were presented by his successor. Josephus mentions the synagogue at Tiberias, where, during the Roman War, political meetings were held.

Wellhausen thinks that the synagogue supplanted the "high places," and it has been suggested that the prevalence of the custom of building synagogues on a height, wherever possible, is a survival of this origin. On the other hand, the necessity for preliminary ablutions before worship occasioned the frequent choice of a synagogue site by the side of a stream or lake, or even the sea. Equal divergence is seen in the orientation of the synagogues. Num. 3³⁸ directed the Tabernacle to be placed facing the east, but existing remains of the ancient buildings show that the entrance to a synagogue was generally from the south.

A synagogue was built usually as a basilica, that is,

it was rectangular in plan and divided into three or five aisles by rows of columns. The outside entrance was often a highly decorated portico, while the exterior architecture exhibited the usual Græco-Roman influence.

At the end opposite to the entrance was an apse with a raised canopied dais. On this was placed the chest or "ark" containing the sacred writings wrapped in an embroidered cloth, and in front of the ark a lamp was hung and kept constantly burning. Sometimes a lectern and chair stood also upon the dais (cf. Lk. 4²⁰). In larger synagogues the platform from which the speaker addressed the congregation stood in the centre of the area. The "chief seats" were in front of the platform facing the congregation, the latter sitting on benches or on mats arranged in rows across the building. Every synagogue supported, at least, two officers.

The Ruler.—He was the chief official, his duty making him responsible for the maintenance and order of the public worship. He did not conduct that worship himself, but he selected any one who, in his opinion, was competent for the purpose (cf. Acts 13¹⁵). He was probably an elder, and would occupy one of the "chief seats."

The Minister or Attendant.—This officer was responsible for the cleaning and lighting of the building. He prepared the synagogue for public worship, and proclaimed the feasts or festivals by trumpet blasts from the roof. During the service he presented the sacred writings to the reader, and, in due course, replaced them in the ark with fitting ceremony (Lk. 4¹⁷⁻²⁰). Some-

times he might himself act as reader. The attendant had also certain secular duties. To him fell the task of scourging criminals condemned by the synagogue courts (Mt. 10¹⁷ 23³⁴, etc.), and perhaps he also assisted in the teaching of the children in the synagogue schools.

The public worship was simple in character. Sabbath and festival days were, of course, the chief occasions for the congregation to meet together, and the services were then well attended, and were conducted in full. On Mondays and Thursdays, however, which were the usual market days, there were sufficient worshippers to make their needs felt, and for these, abridged services were usually held.

The full service was divided into two parts: a preliminary devotional exercise, and a time for public instruction. The first part consisted of the recitation of prayers, the reading of the Scriptures, and, later, the singing of Psalms. The prayers were sometimes read by the leader alone, and sometimes were recited jointly. The reading fell into two parts: the Law and the Prophets, the latter being read only at Sabbath-morning service. The passages from the Law were prescribed on a system by which the five so-called Mosaic books were gone through completely in three and a half years, that is, half a Sabbatic period. The passages selected from the Prophetic writings would be chosen by the reader. It was this Prophetic lesson our Lord read in the synagogue at Nazareth (Lk. 4^{10ff.}). The Hagiographa, except the Book of Esther, were not at this period read at Divine Service.

The reading was in Hebrew, but as this gradually ceased to be the common language of the people an interpreter was provided, who translated the reading as it went on. The unique position which the Law occupied at this time was shown by the fact that it had to be translated verse by verse, whereas the Prophetic reading could be taken three "verses" at a time. The translation was not necessarily literal, but more of the nature of a paraphrase which aimed at interpretation, with even a certain amount of exposition, a custom which, it is suggested, gave rise to sermons.

The sermon or "teaching" was the usage in New Testament times. The instruction was given in the sitting posture (Lk. 4²⁰), the usual attitude of the teacher (Mt. 5¹ 26⁵⁵, Jn. 8²). Professional preachers were not employed (though the scribes naturally occupied the position frequently), but any one might be invited to give the address (Acts 13¹⁵). The service was closed by the pronouncement of the Priestly Benediction (Num. 6²⁴⁻²⁶), if a priest were present. If not, a layman gave the blessing in the form of a prayer. Sometimes alms on behalf of the poor were solicited before the congregation dispersed (Mt. 6²).

The synagogue was also used as a school for the education of the Jewish children. They met either in the place of worship or, in the case of wealthier communities, in an adjacent building. It was also used as a court of justice. Here the council or local Sanhedrin met, consisting of twenty-three members in populous communities, or of seven in smaller towns and villages,

This court had power to impose excommunication (Lk. 6²², Jn. 9²² 12⁴² 16²), scourging, etc., and its jurisdiction was recognized by the Romans, who availed themselves of its assistance in the keeping of order.

THE SABBATH.

Of all their religious institutions there was none which the Jews venerated more highly than the Sabbath. With its origin going back to the very beginnings of the nation, the Sabbath became one of their most distinctive possessions, their most sacred festival, and the characteristic feature of their religious life. To the heathen it was the peculiar mark of a peculiar people. Nothing surprised them so much as the importance which the Jews attached to the strict observance of the Day of Rest. It is interesting to notice that both Greek and Roman authors refer to this custom and speak contemptuously of the Jewish "folly," as they call it, "to waste a seventh part of their lives in idleness." But it is the wisdom of the Greeks which has proved to be foolishness, and the experience of the ages is on the side of the Jews, who set apart one day in seven for rest and worship.

Like other Jewish observances, the Sabbath suffered considerably at the hands of the Rabbis, who hedged it round with numerous restrictions. The plain Mosaic command, "Thou shalt not do any work," was elaborated by them so as to cover no less than thirty-nine distinct kinds of work, each of which had many subdivisions.

Thus ploughing, sowing, reaping, baking, weaving, making or untying a knot, writing letters and the like were among the forbidden works. The first occasion on which our Lord came into conflict with their decisions was when on a Sabbath His disciples, passing through a ripe cornfield (probably in the month of May), plucked the ears of corn as they went, and ate them, after having rubbed off the husks in their hands (Mt. 12¹⁻⁸, Mk. 2²³⁻²⁸, Lk. 6¹⁻⁵). On any day except the Sabbath this would have been lawful, for we read in Deut. 23²⁵, "When thou comest into thy neighbour's standing corn, then thou mayest pluck the ears with thine hand." But it was forbidden on the Sabbath day, and involved a double violation of the law. For plucking the ears fell under the head of reaping, and rubbing them under that of threshing.

Under the Mosaic Law it was also forbidden to carry any burden. But what was a burden? The answer of the Rabbis was that "anything of the weight of a dry fig is a burden." Hence to carry a bed (Jn. 5¹⁰) was a serious breach of the Sabbath law.

Again, there was only a certain distance that a man might travel on the Sabbath. The length of a lawful *Sabbath day's journey* was fixed at 2000 cubits (about 1000 yards), the distance by which the Ark preceded the host of the Israelites. But there were ways of getting the better of this law. If, before the Sabbath, the traveller placed food at a spot 2000 cubits on, that place, by a legal fiction, was considered to be his home, and he could then go on beyond it for another 1000 yards.

The Sabbath was considered to begin on Friday evening at sunset, and to end at sunset on the Saturday, and so all work had to be finished before Friday evening, and nothing fresh attempted which might lead to a desecration of the Day. A tailor, for example, must not go out at twilight on that evening carrying his needle, lest he should forget the hour when the Sabbath began and transgress the law. This explains the Jews' request that the bodies of Jesus and the two robbers might be taken down from the Cross (Jn. 19³¹). The custom was to remove the bodies of those who had been crucified, and to bury them before sunset. And it also explains why the burial of our Lord was carried out in haste. Jesus died at the ninth hour, that is to say, at 3 p.m., and Joseph and his friends had to return home before 6 p.m.—when the Sabbath began—leaving the completion of the embalming till the Day of Rest was past (Lk. 23⁵⁶).

It was held to be unlawful to cure on the Sabbath, or to apply a remedy except when life was in danger. In the healing of the man with a withered hand (Mt. 12⁹⁻¹⁴, Mk. 3¹⁻⁵, Lk. 6⁶⁻¹¹) the Pharisees argued that the man's affliction was not such as to endanger his life, and therefore it was a breach of the law that Jesus should grant his prayer and effect a cure.

It is a mistake, however, to imagine that the Jewish Sabbath, even with this "tangled forest of prohibitions," was a day so burdened with restrictions as to be devoid of all happiness and freedom. On the contrary it is, and always has been, a great festal day

in which no form of enjoyment compatible with strict abstinence from work is forbidden. "All the days of the week," say the Rabbis, "has God paired, except the Sabbath, which is alone, that it may be wedded to Israel"; and it is as a bride that Israel welcomes the Sabbath.

The preparations for the Sabbath begin on Friday evening. Before sunset the mistress of the house lights the special Sabbath lamp in the room where the meal is to be taken after synagogue service, saying as she does so, "Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, Who hast sanctified us by Thy commandments, and commanded us to light the Sabbath lamp." While it is still light, the table is spread with a white cloth, and two specially prepared loaves, commemorating the double portion of manna in the wilderness, are placed at the head of the table and covered with a napkin. Beside the loaves stand a cup and a bottle of wine. When the father and sons return from the service in the synagogue they take their places at the table, and the father then begins the "Kiddush," or "Sanctification," ceremony over the wine. Having recited the verses in Genesis dealing with the works of creation on the sixth and seventh day, he takes the bottle of wine, and, filling the cup, repeats these words: "Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, the Creator of the fruit of the vine. Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, Who hast sanctified us by Thy commandments, and wast pleased with us, and hast given us for a heritage, in

love and favour, Thy holy Sabbath, a memorial of the work of creation. For it precedes all the holy convocations, in memory of the going forth from Egypt. For Thou hast chosen us, and hast hallowed us above all nations, and hast given us in love and favour Thy holy Sabbath for a heritage. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, Who hallowest the Sabbath." He then drinks from the cup and hands it to his wife, and she, and all at the table, drink from it. The ceremony of washing the hands follows, and after this the bread is broken. The benediction, "Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, Who bringest forth bread from the earth," is repeated, and then one of the loaves is cut, and the bread is divided among the company. The whole ceremony, it will be noted, has much that is similar to the Christian Eucharist.

"The most important feature about the Sabbath-morning service is the reading of the Lessons and the connected ceremonies. The most sacred thing in a synagogue is the scroll of the Law, and the central and most solemn point in the great synagogue service of the week—that on Saturday morning—is reached when the Reader and other synagogue officials proceed solemnly to the Ark and bring back the sacred scroll to the reading-desk for the reading of the weekly section. The Pentateuch lessons may only lawfully be read from a specially prepared parchment scroll, which is known as *Sefer Torah*. Ordinary printed editions on paper are not allowed for this purpose. For reading purposes the Pentateuch has been divided into fifty-four sections, to

cover a year. As in some cases the requisite number of Sabbaths does not occur in the year, two sections are occasionally read instead of one. The Pentateuch lesson is distributed among various persons who are said to be 'called up' to the reading. It is the function of the Leader (Segan) to call up these three, four, five, six, seven (or more) men to the reading-desk (shulchan). Formerly each person so called read his allotted portion himself; but this is now always done by the Chazzan or Reader, the person called simply standing by the side of the former, and following the text as it is read."¹

After the evening service on Saturday in the synagogue the family returns to the house and takes part in what is known as the "Habdalah" or "Separation" ceremony, which makes a division between the "holy" time of the Sabbath and the "profane" time of the work-day following it. A cup of wine, a lighted candle, and a spice-box are the things required for this ceremony. The cup is filled, and a little of the wine is allowed to run over as a symbol of joy. A brief benediction is said over the wine, the spices, and the light, and then the Habdalah blessing is pronounced: "Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, Who distinguishest between holy and profane, between light and darkness, between Israel and the nations, between the seventh day and the six work-days: Blessed art Thou, O Lord, Who distinguishest between holy and profane." The wine is then drunk and the candle put out with the drops

¹ W. O. E. Oesterley and G. H. Box, *The Religion and Worship of the Synagogue*, p. 351.

remaining in the cup. It is customary also to sing hymns at the Habdalah service, the best known probably being that which begins with the words, "May He Who distinguishes between holy and profane forgive our sins." The Kiddush and Habdalah ceremonies are both of considerable antiquity, and were already an established custom in pre-Christian days.

THE FEAST OF THE DEDICATION.

This festival was not of Biblical origin, but was instituted by Judas Maccabæus in 164 B.C., after the Temple had been profaned by Antiochus Epiphanes (see art. THE VISIONS OF DANIEL, vol. ii. p. 265), the altar defiled, and the "abomination of desolation" erected upon it (1 Macc. 1⁵⁴).

For three years the Temple remained desecrated, then the heroic efforts of the Maccabees were crowned with temporary success, and the sanctity of the building was restored. The Holy Place was cleansed, a week was set aside for special dedicatory services, while, to commemorate this national event, it was decreed by Judas that henceforth "the days of the dedication of the altar should be kept in their seasons from year to year by the space of eight days, from the fifth and twentieth day of the month Chislev (December) with gladness of joy" (1 Macc. 4⁵⁹).

Josephus calls the feast "The Lights." This was because the illumination of the Temple and of the houses of the people became a characteristic rite. Its

observance was based upon the legend that, when the Temple services were restored by Judas Maccabæus, the oil was found to have been desecrated, and that only one flagon was available for use, this being sealed with the very signet of the High Priest. The supply proved just sufficient to feed the Sacred Candlestick for one day; but, like the widow's cruse in the time of Elijah, the flagon was miraculously replenished each day for the eight days of the festival. It was therefore enacted that henceforth the Temple be illuminated for eight days on the anniversary of its dedication.

The lights in honour of the feast were lit not only in the Temple but in every home. "One would have sufficed for the whole household on the first evening," says Dr. Edersheim; "but pious householders lit a light for every inmate of the home, so that, if ten burned on the first, there would be eighty on the last night of the festival. According to the Talmud, the light might be placed at the entrance to the house or room, or, according to circumstances, in the window, or even on the table. According to modern practice, the light is placed at the left on entering a room (the Mezuzah is on the right). Certain benedictions are spoken on lighting these lights, all work is stayed, and the festive time spent in merriment. The first night is specially kept in memory of Judith, who is supposed to have slain Holofernes, and cheese is freely partaken of as the food of which, according to the legend, she gave him so largely, to incite him to thirst and drunkenness. Lastly, during this festival, all fasting and public

mourning were prohibited, though some private acts of private mourning were allowed."

The feast is specifically mentioned in the Gospels (Jn. 10²²), namely, when Jesus was walking in Solomon's Porch, and the Jews crowding round Him asked, "How long dost thou hold us in suspense? If thou art the Christ, tell us plainly." The significance of this question is seen from 1 Macc. 4⁴⁴⁻⁴⁶. "And when, as they consulted what to do with the altar of burnt-offerings, which was profaned, they thought it best to pull it down, lest it should be a reproach to them, because the heathen had defiled it: wherefore they pulled it down, and laid up the stones in the mountain of the Temple in a convenient place, until there should come a prophet to show what should be done with them." For there in the Temple, two centuries later, upon the anniversary of the reconstruction of the altar, stood Jesus, perhaps the very prophet foretold in the above passage.

It is not clear whether the whole of St. John's narrative at this point belongs to the Feast of the Dedication or partly to the Feast of Tabernacles (see art. vol. ii. p. 107), for these two festivals had much in common. In fact, it would appear that the Feast of the Dedication was modelled to some extent on the older observance, and in both cases special illuminations were included. But most agree that our Lord's words, "I am the light of the world" (Jn. 9⁵), were directly suggested by these festive lamps.

THE WASHING OF HANDS.

In Mk. 7¹⁻⁶ and Mt. 15¹⁻² the charge is brought against Jesus that He and His disciples were lax in the matter of the prescribed ablutions before a meal.

The origin of this ordinance is obscure. It is definitely stated in the Gospels to have been a "tradition of the elders," which implied that it was not an injunction of the Law of Moses. But, having been established, Scriptural authority was sought for it and conveniently found in Lev. 15¹¹, and in the command, "Sanctify yourselves," in Lev. 11⁴⁴.

The water used for these ceremonial washings was taken from large stone jars kept specially for the purpose. These were the jars used by our Lord in the miracle of the marriage feast at Cana (Jn. 2⁶). It was the custom to draw water out of them with a special vessel which held at least a quarter of a log, a measure equal to one and a half "egg-shells," and to pour it on the hands as they were held over a basin. The hands were lifted up so that the water ran to the wrists, thus preventing the defilement of the washed portions by a return of the used water. The hands had also to be free from gross dirt such as soil. The one hand was rubbed with the fist of the other.

If the hands were known to be ceremonially defiled by contact with anything, then two affusions were necessary, the "first waters" to remove the defilement, and the "second waters" to wash away the water that had contracted the defilement of the hands. Accord-

ingly for the first washing the hands were elevated so that the water ran down to the wrists, while for the second washing the hands were held down so that the water might run off from the finger-tips. Later two affusions became the constant rule, while the modern Jews affect a triple washing, the rite being accompanied by a special benediction.

At the time of our Lord, the question of this washing of hands had become particularly acute, for there had been a heated debate between two of the leading Rabbinical schools in Jerusalem on matters of ceremonial purity. But though their views had differed on some points they had united in re-enacting the decree in this matter of ablutions before food. This made the observance much more important, and to omit it was to be guilty of gross carnal defilement which, said the Rabbis, would lead to destruction, or at least poverty.

See also art. CEREMONIAL PURITY, vol. i. p. 139.

FASTS.

In the time of Christ, fasting appears to have been a prominent religious feature of Jewish life. Strictly speaking, there was only one fast day ordained by the Mosaic Law, namely, the Day of Atonement (see art. vol. i. p. 133), and in Acts 27⁹ this day is referred to simply as "the Fast." In Old Testament days there had been four annual fasts commemorative of national calamities, referred to in Zech. 8¹⁹, but they had fallen into disuse, though they were revived again after the

destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. They were known respectively as the fast of the fourth month, the fast of the fifth, of the seventh, and of the tenth. The fast of the tenth month took place on the 10th of Tebeth, and commemorated the beginning of the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadrezzar. The fast of the fourth month, on the 17th Tammuz (June to July), commemorated the breach made in the walls. The fast of the fifth month, "The Black Fast," on the 9th of Ab (July to August), was in memory of the destruction of the First and Second Temples; and the fast of the seventh month, on the 2nd of Tishri (September to October), was kept on account of the assassination of Gedaliah and his associates at Mizpah (cf. Jer. 41).

At the time of our Lord it was customary to fast twice a week (Lk. 18¹²), between the Paschal week and the Feast of Pentecost, and between the Feasts of Tabernacles and the Dedication. Monday and Thursday were set apart for this purpose, because, said the Rabbis, Moses had gone up Mount Sinai on a Thursday to receive the Law, and had descended on a Monday.

On public fasts it was the custom to carry the Ark, which was placed in each synagogue and which contained the sacred Roll of the Law, into the street, and there to strew it with ashes, the people at the same time appearing in sackcloth and ashes. Ashes were also cast publicly upon the heads of the elders and judges. Public confession was then made, and an exhortation given in the open air by one chosen for his piety and age. After prayer the people repaired to the cemeteries, there to

wail and weep. This went on from one sundown to the next, and until the appearance of the stars, and for this period, lasting generally twenty-six hours, the most rigid abstinence from food and drink was enjoined, and even salutations in the streets forbidden.

THE RENDING OF GARMENTS.

Among the outward tokens of grief at the death of a relative was the practice of tearing the clothes, the rent made being not less than a handbreadth long. If the act was performed on account of the loss of a parent, all the garments were rent. Both sexes were required to do this; but in the case of women the rent on the inner garment was made privately, but that on the outer garment publicly.

The time for making the tear was at the burial of the dead body, just before it was hidden from view. Thirty days was the duration of the period of mourning, and if news came of the death of a relative after this period had expired there was no obligation to rend clothes. But in the case of the death of father or mother, the practice was enforced no matter how late the news might be received.

Garments were also torn if an individual heard any one blaspheme. Thus Caiaphas, at the trial of our Lord before the Sanhedrin, "rent his garments, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy" (Mt. 26⁶⁵). The High Priest was not allowed to tear his clothes in mourning for the dead, but only in the case of blasphemy, and he was

enjoined then to rend "both his outer and his inner garments with a rent that could never be repaired."

The clothes were also rent if a member of the family became apostate—when he was mourned as though already dead—and during persecution, if a copy of the Sacred Roll of the Law was destroyed.

The following articles also bear upon this section :

The Feast of the Passover, vol. i. p. 79.

The Rite of Circumcision, vol. i. p. 191.

Nazirites, vol. i. p. 241.

The Feast of Tabernacles, vol. ii. p. 107.

The Feast of Trumpets and New Moons, vol. ii. p. 286.

The Day of Pentecost, vol. iii. p. 162.

The Sanhedrin, vol. iii. p. 207.

JESUS IN THE HOME.

A FELLAHÎN HOME IN PALESTINE.

Four thick walls built of mud and rough hewn stones, with an opening for a door, and perhaps another for a window, with a floor of trodden clay, are all that a peasant in Palestine requires for a house. Into such a humble dwelling was our Lord born, and in such simple environment were His childhood years spent.

His familiarity with this type of house is abundantly evidenced in His parables and sayings. Thus He likens the wise to those who build their homes upon a rock, for He had seen the havoc wrought by the sudden torrential rains which accompany a thunderstorm. Then dry nullahs are converted into foaming torrents,

and the water so useful for the softening of the hard, sun-baked earth (Ps. 65¹⁰) has the same solvent action on the mud walls of the houses. These are sometimes literally melted unless the foundations are secure (Mt. 7^{24ff.}). Mud walls also offer little resistance to the thief, who can force an entrance into a house by digging through them (Mt. 6^{19, 20} 26⁴³; cf. Job 24¹⁶).

The interior of these houses is dark and not too wholesome, for ventilation is not a strong point in the East, and light is excluded, because sunshine means too great a heat. Thus, when an object is lost, even in the daytime a lamp is needed to peer into the dusty corners. "What woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a lamp, and sweep the house, and seek diligently until she find it?" The use of the definite article should be noted in similar passages. It is well marked, for example, in Mk. 4²¹: "Is the lamp brought to be put under the bushel, or under the bed, and not to be put on the stand?" For in peasant homes there is but one of each of these domestic conveniences. The lamp in question is a small, shallow clay vessel, no bigger than a saucer, in which the burning wick floats on the olive oil. The flame is, of course, dim, but the Oriental does not work by artificial light. The lamp is chiefly a means of keeping at bay the evil spirits that roam about at night, for absolute darkness is much feared by Orientals. So at sundown the lamp is lighted and placed in the middle of the house upon a rough support, made often from a natural tripod branch standing about 3 feet high.

There is no furniture in an Eastern peasant home comparable to that of a Western cottage. Walls and floors are often bare earth or plaster. At night the "bed" is but a mat laid on the hard ground, and a few vessels for corn and oil, and one or two simple implements, constitute the total belongings of a poor man. A table and a chair may be found in the house of an artisan, while superior working men may adorn their homes with a few hangings and cushioned divans.

In the one-roomed village house the stable is part of the living room, and the part assigned to the goat, or the ass, or the littlered ox belonging to the family, is often separated from the rest only by a raised step, the manger being placed as a sort of barrier between the two. And in such a manger, with the crushed straw and barley as bedding, many newborn infants in Palestine to-day are laid, and swaddled, that is, wrapped round and round with a bandage of linen or cotton some 6 yards in length. Imagination can hardly picture a lowlier state, and one of greater helplessness, than such a swaddled fellahin child laid in the rude manger of a peasant house.

At night the inmates of the house sleep with their feet towards the central hearth. They do not undress to "go to bed," but simply divest themselves of their outer cloaks and use them as a covering. Thus the whole household are disturbed when an importunate knock is heard at the door, and the goodman of the house may reply, "Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed" (Lk. 11⁷).

Allusion has been made to the fact that the beds are often only thin rugs or mattresses easily rolled up and carried (Mt. 9⁶, Mk. 2¹¹, Jn. 5⁸). The reference in Lk. 17³⁴, "In that night there shall be two men on one bed," is probably to the divan found in houses other than those of the very poor.

See also art. ORIENTAL HOUSES AND FURNITURE, vol. ii. p. 38.

THE PARABLE OF THE PRODIGAL SON.

The custom of a father dividing his property among his grown sons before his death is not uncommon in the East, and it is said that in certain provinces of India to-day the division can actually be demanded by any of the sons once the youngest comes of age. In the case of two sons of a Jewish home, the portion of the elder would be two-thirds, and that of the younger the remaining third. But a father had the right to disinherit his sons if he wished. If he chose to do this, the disposition had to be made when presumably near to death. No one in good health could diminish, save by gift, the legal portion of a younger son. The singling out of the younger son as the prodigal is also in keeping with Oriental tradition, for in a Syrian home the elder son stood next to the father, and would not be supposed to be so forgetful of his position and birthright as to break the family circle and waste his substance in riotous living.

To feed swine is the most degrading occupation con-

ceivable to a Jew, and every passage in the Bible in which these animals are referred to reflects the horror in which they were held. At the present day swine are scarcely ever seen in Palestine, though in New Testament times some Jews apparently kept them for Gentile trade.

The "husks which the swine did eat" are carob or locust bean pods, to be seen on the vegetable stalls of every Oriental town, and indeed in many English towns as well. The carob tree is a very common one in Syria, growing in every variety and situation. It is a conspicuous object with its dense foliage and round, glossy, evergreen leaves. It blossoms at the end of February, and the pods are found in enormous quantities in April and May. Children eat them freely, for they have a sweet taste, but they are sold chiefly as provender for animals, and are regarded as very poor food for human beings. Indeed, the modern Syrian has a proverb concerning the conversation of people whose speech is prolific, but whose ideas are meagre: "It is like eating Kherrub (carob); you have to consume a cord of wood in order to get an ounce of sweet."

When the prodigal returned it was the father who welcomed him. In the East the position of a woman is in the background. The husband is lord of the household and must do the honours. So of old did Abraham extend hospitality. It is therefore in harmony with Oriental tradition that in the record of the festive preparations no mention is made of the mother.

The slaying of the "fatted calf" had a sacrificial

significance, says Rihbany: "The ancient custom, whose echoes have not yet died out in the East, was that the host honoured his guest most highly by killing a sheep at the threshold of the house, upon the guest's arrival, and inviting him to step over the blood into the house. This act formed the 'blood covenant' between the guest and his host. It made them one. To us one of the most cordial and dignified expressions in inviting a guest, especially from a distant town, was, 'If God ever favours us with a visit from you, we will kill a zebihat (animal sacrifice).'"

The prodigal on his return asked that he might become a "hired servant." There were three classes of servant in the East: slaves, hired servants, and unhired servants. The first were mainly captives of war, the second class corresponded more or less to the domestic servants to-day, while the third belonged to a higher stratum of society, and often were drawn from poor relations, or others who hoped to gain advancement by service. Thus Elisha is said to have "poured water on the hands of Elijah" (2 Kings 3¹¹), that is, ministered to him as a servant. "These servants," says James Neil, "generally have two suits of clothes given them annually by the master, and receive considerable gratuities from his guests, suitors, and tradesmen; for they occupy a place similar to our upper servants, only that their duties are very light and less menial. Hence the force of those words on the lips of the prodigal son, referring to this difference between the hired and the unhired *diakonoï*: 'Make me as one of thy hired servants,'

for, as a poor ruined son, he might naturally have become one of the more honourable unhired servants."

DAILY BREAD.

Bread in the East is both leavened and unleavened, and there are still tribes among the Arabs who will eat only the latter. The origin of this custom is traced by some to the ancient exclusion of leaven from the sacrificial offerings on the ground possibly of its tendency to fermentation, just as honey was excluded. But, whether this be so or not, the objection to leavened bread among the desert dwellers to-day is almost certainly practical, as the unleavened cakes are much easier to bake. The idea that leaven was associated with corruption is not borne out by modern Syrians, who hold this substance in high and reverential esteem.

The most primitive method of bread-making is that employed by the Arabs, who dig a hollow in the ground, in which they lay dry grasses and thorns. These are fired, and on the hot embers are placed flat cakes of dough, which they turn frequently so that they will be cooked well on both sides. In this way, probably, was the food prepared by Abraham (Gen. 18⁶), and the widow at Zarephath (1 Kings 17^{12, 13}). Such, too, would be the cakes or "barley loaves" brought to Christ at the feeding of the five thousand (Jn. 6⁹). Barley cakes, however, are deemed very inferior to wheaten bread, and are eaten only by the poor.

These cakes are about 8 inches in diameter, and perhaps half an inch thick, so that it takes quite two of them

to make a meal for a hungry man, a fact which throws light upon the request of the importunate neighbour to be given three loaves (Lk. 11⁵); "to which it should be added," says James Neil, "that it is essential to the prodigality of Oriental hospitality to place before a guest more than he can eat, especially in the case of bread. Sometimes in the Holy Land at a meal I have had a dozen of such loaves piled up before me. In this way Joseph sent from his own table to his brother Benjamin five times as much food as the sufficient meal set before each of his other brothers, though he knew Benjamin could not possibly consume it. Just as it was in Joseph's palace some three thousand years ago, so it is, in proportion, in the humblest houses of the East to-day, in the case of a loved and honoured guest, for nothing changes in the changeless East."

In the act of eating, bread is broken or torn apart by the hand, for the Oriental considers it impious to cut it. At a meal a small piece is detached and made to do duty as a spoon, each person sitting round a common dish and dipping his bread into it (Mt. 16²³). This is done quite elegantly, without allowing the contents of the dish to be touched by the fingers, or with anything else that might have come into contact with the lips.

"In a land," says Dr. Mackie, "where communication with other sources of supply was difficult, everything depended upon the local wheat and barley harvest. As this in turn depended upon the rain in its season, which was beyond the control of the sower,

a special sanctity attached itself to what was peculiarly a gift of God, and a reminder of His continual and often undeserved care (Mt. 5⁴⁵). To the disciples of Jesus, 'Give us this day our daily bread' would seem a very natural petition. An Oriental seeing a scrap of bread on the road, will usually lift it up and throw it to a street dog, or place it in a crevice of the wall, or on a tree branch, where the birds may find it. It should not be trodden under foot in the common dust. Thus the most familiar article of food, so constantly in the hands of all, both rich and poor, and used alike by the evil and the good, had in it an element of mystery and nobility as having been touched by the unseen Giver of all good. How deeply this feeling of reverence possessed the mind of the Lord Jesus is evidenced by the fact that He was recognized in the breaking of bread (Lk. 24³⁵). There also God's gift of natural food to His people enters into the praises of the Magnificat (Lk. 1⁵³). When Christ called Himself the 'bread of life' (Jn. 6³⁵), He could confidently appeal to all the endeared and sacred associations connected in the East with the meaning and use of bread" ¹

A SYRIAN MEAL.

Among the great mass of the people in Syria only two meals a day are taken, namely, "breakfast" and "supper," and these are the only two mentioned in the New Testament, as, for example, in Lk. 14¹³,

¹ G. M. Mackie, "Bread," Hastings' *DCG*.

where Christ says, "When thou makest a dinner, or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, nor thy kinsmen, nor rich neighbours." The word translated "dinner," refers to the morning-meal. As a rule it is the evening meal to which guests are invited, though the noble or the very wealthy may entertain at breakfast. Thus Joseph, as "Lord of Egypt," prepared a feast at noon (Gen. 43¹⁶), and in the parable of the Marriage Feast it was a king who prepared a breakfast (Mt. 22⁴). So also the Pharisee who asked Christ to "breakfast with him" was a wealthy person (Lk. 11³⁷).

The fellahîn, or villagers, of Palestine sit on the floor at meal time, their feet tucked under them so that they rest on their heels, a posture disagreeable to a Westerner, but, through long usage, quite comfortable to the Oriental. In the centre of the group stands a small, low table, and on it is placed the common dish. Into this dish they dip their bread, as when Boaz said to Ruth, "Dip thy morsel in the vinegar" (Ruth 2¹⁴). This, too, was the way in which our Lord and His disciples were eating when He referred to Judas as "he that dippeth with me in the dish."

"And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon" (Jn. 13²⁶). "At Syrian feasts," says Rihbany, "especially in the region where Jesus lived, such sops are handed to those who stand and serve the guests with wine and water. But in a more significant manner these morsels are exchanged by friends. Choice bits of food are handed to friends by one another, as signs of close intimacy. It is never

expected that any person would hand a sop to one for whom he cherishes no friendship.”¹

When a guest arrives, the usual salutation given by the host, if both are of social equality, is a kiss. The right hand is placed on the left shoulder of the guest as the right cheek is saluted, and the left hand on the right shoulder when the left cheek is kissed. This salutation is first offered by the host and then returned by the guest. A slave is then summoned, girded with a towel round his waist and bearing a basin and ewer. The former is placed underneath the bared hands and feet respectively, and the water from the ewer is poured over them. A second slave also attends with the perfume which is sprinkled over the guest, and, in a rich house, a third slave may bring in a burning censer and a napkin with which the head is covered for a moment, so that the fragrant smoke of the incense may impregnate the garments of the guest. More rarely, costly essential oils or essences, such as attar of roses, may be dropped upon the head. It was the total absence of these customary attentions that drew from Jesus the rebuke in Lk. 7⁴⁴⁻⁴⁶, “Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath wetted my feet with her tears, and wiped them with her hair. Thou gavest me no kiss: but she, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but she hath anointed my feet with ointment.”

As the guests enter, if there be more than one, he who

¹ A. M. Rahbany, *The Syrian Christ*, p. 49.

is highest in rank is placed on the right hand of the host. This observance is referred to very often in the Bible. Thus the mother of the sons of Zebedee requested that her two sons might sit one on the right hand and one on the left hand of Jesus in His Kingdom. For the left hand of the host is the second place of honour, the second on the right the next place of honour, and so on alternately. These seats are called "rooms" in the Authorized Version of Lk. 14⁸⁻¹⁰. The lowest seat at a feast is the extreme left. This matter of position is very important in the Eastern code, and if a host finds that any of his guests is incorrectly placed, it is his duty to request that the matter be put right. So the host in the parable is made to say, "Friend, go up higher," and this injunction is received as a rebuke by the one who has usurped another's seat.

When the meal is ordered, the same command is used as in the days of the Old Testament: "Set on bread" (Gen. 43³¹). Thereafter the slaves stand with their arms folded and their eyes intent upon those of the master of the house awaiting any fresh orders. So in Ps. 123² we read:

"Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their
master,
As the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress;
So our eyes look unto the Lord our God."

The food is placed in a common dish into which all dip their bread as is described in the article DAILY BREAD, p. 86. Water is not put on the table at meal times, but, like wine, is brought to those who call for it. The

drinking cup is a small bowl without handles, usually of brass, and held from below, poised on the tips of the fingers. Like the dish, it is common to all who sit down.

After every meal an Oriental not only washes his hands, but also rinses his mouth with water. Some of the Pharisees, in New Testament days, even washed between the courses, holding the hands with the fingers up so that the uncleanness might be washed down from them. A distinction requires to be drawn between ceremonial cleansing and the actual refreshment of water necessitated by the hot climate. It is to the former of these that the accusation in Mk. 7²⁻⁵ refers.

THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN THE EAST.

The Oriental social codes give men precedence over women, but the apparent indifference shown to women does not spring from any idea of the absolute superiority of the male sex so much as from the feeling expressed in their proverb, "When love occurs, formalities cease." The ancient commandment, "Thou shalt honour thy father and thy mother," gives a truer sense of proportion. Moreover, the Oriental women were exposed to dangers unknown to us. Women-stealing was very prevalent in ancient times, and indeed is still practised by some of the Arab tribes, and social privileges were denied as a safeguard. The duty to protect naturally carries with it the right to discipline. The word *harim*, too, which conveys so disagreeable an idea to the Western mind, has no harmful association for the

Oriental. The word denotes in its derivation something that is sacred, and by no means presupposes polygamy. A man's mother, wife, sisters, and daughters, for example, may contribute to this *harim*. They are kept in seclusion because they are sacred.

If we turn to the other side of the picture, there is no doubt, from the question put to Christ by the Pharisees, "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?" (Mt. 19³), and still more from the astonishment with which the disciples had listened to the reply of Jesus (v. 10), that divorce could be obtained on very frivolous pretexts. The ancient Deuteronomic Code reads: "When a man taketh a wife, and marrieth her, then it shall be, if she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some unseemly thing in her, that he shall write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house" (Deut. 24¹). The "unseemliness" or "matter of shame" was interpreted in New Testament times in the widest sense. The school of Hillel, for example, declared it to be sufficient ground for divorce if a woman spoiled her husband's dinner, while others interpreted the phrase, "if she find no favour in his eyes," as justifying divorce if a man found another woman more attractive than his wife.

"According to the Mishnah, women could not only be divorced, but also might lose their dowry, if they transgressed against the Law of Moses or of Israel. The former is explained as implying a breach of the laws of tithing, of setting apart the first of the dough, and of purification. The latter is explained as referring to

such offences as that of going in public with uncovered head, of spinning in the public streets, or entering into talk with men, to which others add that of brawling, or of disrespectfully speaking of her husband's parents in his presence. A troublesome or quarrelsome wife might certainly be sent away; and ill repute or childlessness (during ten years) was also regarded as a valid ground of divorce."¹

MEDICINE AND DISEASE IN PALESTINE.

The laws of ceremonial cleanliness forbidding any one to touch a dead body must have been a contributing factor to the ignorance of the Hebrews concerning the human body and its ailments, for the science of pathology and the art of surgery alike depend upon the examination and the dissection of the body. It is, of course, probable that Palestine was healthier in Bible times than now. Its want of harbours would protect it against the importation of epidemics, and the climate was favourable. If the population enjoyed good health, that would be a second reason why the art of medicine did not develop.

A third cause lay in the association of disease with religious ideas. Disease was regarded as a sign of Divine displeasure sent by God with special motive. This being so, it was impious to attempt to combat it. If healing occurred, that, too, was God's, and was a sign of Divine forgiveness. Thus arose the close association

¹ A. Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, p. 334.

of the priest with the physician. The priests alone, by reason of the sacrificial technique, had any knowledge of anatomy. But such knowledge as they had of the bodily structure was very deficient. Thus the bowels were credited with being the organs of sympathy, the kidneys of affection and conscience, and the heart as the seat of intellect. In sickness, generic names covered a multitude of diseases. Leprosy, for example, included such skin diseases as eczema and psoriasis, as well as certain external moulds. Demoniactal possession embraced the majority of nervous disorders, particularly epilepsy; while allusions to such conditions as paralysis, lameness, discharges of different kinds, and fever, are usually symptomatic, and only enable us to guess at the true condition.

The death-rate in Palestine to-day is very high, and the fact that few senile skeletons are found in the excavations renders it probable that long life in Bible times was the exception. People age quickly in the East. Children may marry at the age of adolescence, and youth is often past at a time of life when it is only in its first bloom in Western lands. The death-rate among infants is enormous, a catastrophe attributed to the malignant influence of Lilith, the female demon of Is. 34¹⁴. As a protection against this monster the mother and child must never be left alone, but must be watched day and night, preferably, it would seem, by a noisy crowd of relatives and friends. Copies of an amulet printed in Hebrew are hung up, and other charms are used to counteract the baneful influence.

The newly born child is rubbed all over with salt, water, and oil, and then swaddled (cf. Lk. 2¹²).

The inability of the poor infant to move its arms renders it a ready victim to infection, particularly to *ophthalmia*, one of the commonest causes of blindness in the East, for microbes of all kinds are carried readily by the feet and mouth of a fly, and the dirt of the Oriental is a potent source of disease. The floors of the houses consist simply of hard earth, and consequently can never be cleaned. The mud walls are further sources of infection. The village streets are narrow, and irrigation and sanitation are not even thought of. Heaps of refuse lie at every corner, and afford breeding places for flies. The water supply is not guarded, and constantly receives infected filth, while the personal habits of the peasantry are disgusting. Vermin abounds, and the people actually have a proverb, "May God not remove them," because they regard the sudden departure of these pests as a sign of mortal sickness. Digestive troubles are common, and arise from obvious causes. Thus the Bedawîn live so sparsely that when opportunity occurs they overeat, while the fellahîn often subsist on a single meal a day. This meal causes gastric distension, not only because of its size, but because they combine such indigestible commodities as half-cooked bread with unripe fruit, and add to this an excessive drinking of water.

The remedies for disease which are employed to-day are various. Shrines are visited for all maladies, and,

where the patient cannot attend personally, the earth from the sacred spot is considered to be efficacious (cf. Num. 5¹⁷). Many springs and wells are credited with healing properties, and the hot springs at Tiberias are still resorted to as they were in Bible days. The water of the Dead Sea, by virtue of its salinity, has acquired a reputation for the cure of rheumatism. Where medicinal springs existed, popular belief attributed natural effervescence of gases to angelic influence (cf. Jn. 5⁴). For the most part, any so-called medicines rely for their efficacy upon superstitious belief, and, like the potions and pills of mediæval England, are often disgusting. Amulets and charms are worn by almost every one, and exorcism is widely practised. Undoubtedly, cures result and have resulted from psychical influence. The Mosaic Code provided certain sanitary enactments belonging to the realm of public health. Thus, isolation was prescribed for infectious diseases (Lev. 13⁴); the washing of clothes and of the body was obligatory upon those who had touched anything unclean (Num. 19¹¹), and there were various regulations for the disposal of excreta and refuse.

The art of surgery seems to have been practically unknown to the Hebrews save in the rite of circumcision.

THE HEALING OF THE PARALYTIC.

The record in Mk. 2¹⁻¹² and Lk. 5^{18ff.} states that when Jesus was in a house in Capernaum, and the crowd, eager to listen to His teaching, was so great as to prevent

the approach of the friends of the palsied man, they went to the roof of the house, broke it up, and let down the sick man from above.

“We must banish from our minds every form of European or American houses,” says Dr. Thomson. “Those of Capernaum, as is evident from the ruins, were, like those of modern villages in this same region, low, *very low*, with flat roofs, reached by a stairway from the yard or court. Jesus probably stood in the open *lewan*, and the crowd were around and in front of Him. Those who carried the paralytic, not being able ‘to come at him for the press,’ ascended to the roof, removed so much of it as was necessary, and let down their patient through the aperture. Examine one of these houses, and you will see at once that the thing is natural and easy to be accomplished. The roof is only a few feet high, and by stooping down and holding the corners of the couch—merely a thickly padded quilt, as at present in this region—they could let down the sick man without any apparatus of ropes or cords to assist them. And thus, I suppose, they did. The whole affair was the extemporaneous device of plain peasants, accustomed to open their roofs, and let down grain, straw, and other articles, as they still do in this country.

“The only difficulty in this explanation is to understand how they could break up the roof without sending down such a shower of dust as to incommode our Lord and those around Him. I have often seen it done, and have done it myself to houses in Lebanon, but there

is always more dust made than is agreeable. The materials now employed are beams about three feet apart, across which short sticks are arranged close together, and covered with the thickly matted thorn-bush called *bellan*. Over this is spread a coat of stiff mortar, and then comes the marl or earth which makes the roof. Now it is easy to remove any part of this without injuring the rest. No objection, therefore, would be made on this score by the owners of the house. They had merely to scrape back the earth from a portion of the roof over the *lewan*, take up the thorns and the short sticks, and let down the couch between the beams at the very feet of Jesus. The end achieved, they could speedily restore the roof as it was before. I have the impression, however, that the covering, at least of the *lewan*, was not made of earth, but of materials more easily taken up. It may have been merely of coarse matting, like the walls and roofs of Turkman huts; or it may have been made of boards, or even stone slabs (and such I have seen), that could be quickly removed. All that is necessary, however, for us to know is that the roof was flat, low, easily reached, and easily opened, so as to let down the couch of the sick man; and all these points are rendered intelligible by an acquaintance with modern houses in the villages of Palestine.”¹

The following articles also bear upon this section :

Hebrew Dress and Fashion, vol. ii. p. 144.

Hebrew Marriage Customs, vol. i. p. 253.

¹ W. M. Thomson, *The Land and the Book*, p. 342.

JESUS IN THE COUNTRY.

THE FIG TREE.

The fig tree is the first tree mentioned by name in the Scriptures (Gen. 3⁷), and afterwards it is referred to a great number of times. Its wide distribution is indicated in the description of the Promised Land as one of "wheat and barley, and vines and fig trees and pomegranates; a land of oil, olives, and honey" (Deut. 8⁸). When the spies, sent by Moses to view Canaan, returned, "they brought also of the pomegranates and of the figs." Conversely, the failure or destruction of the fig is the frequent picture of desolation as, for example, in Ps. 105³³, "He smote their vines also and their fig trees"; Jer. 5¹⁷, "They shall eat up thy vines and thy fig trees"; Joel 1¹², "The fig tree languisheth"; and Hab. 3^{17ff}, "For though the fig tree shall not blossom, . . . yet I will rejoice in the Lord."

"To sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree" conveyed to the mind of the Jew the fullest idea of security and peace. Nor is the picture in any way exaggerated, for its dense foliage is such that the fig tree excels all others for its grateful shade, and the owners of gardens everywhere may be seen, as Nathanael was, reposing in its shadow (Jn. 1⁴⁸).

The fruiting of the fig tree is interesting and peculiar, and requires to be understood to appreciate many of the Biblical references to it. About the end of March the tips of the twigs expand into little green knobs

called *paggim*. They are the immature or "green figs" (cf. Cant. 2¹³) which serve as the herald of the coming summer. This is referred to in Mt. 24³², "Now from the fig tree learn her parable: when her branch is now become tender, and putteth forth its leaves, ye know that the summer is nigh." These figs are about the size of cherries. They fall in great numbers with any wind, and are collected and sold for food. This is the analogy in Rev. 6¹³, "And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, as a fig tree casteth her unripe figs (*paggim*), when she is shaken of a great wind."

Sometimes the *paggim* develop and ripen in June, when they are spoken of as *bikkurah* or "firstripe" figs (Jer. 24², Hos. 9¹⁰, Mic. 7¹). They are then highly esteemed on account of their delicate flavour. But there is also a third possible crop of fruit, that known as the autumn fig, which matures about August. This is the fruit that is universally sold and that forms a staple article of Eastern diet (1 Sam. 25¹⁸ 30¹², 1 Chron. 12⁴⁰ etc.). This autumn fig is produced on the new wood of the year, whereas the *paggim* or *bikkurah* grow on the old wood. This phenomenon of successive fruitage in the fig tree is no doubt responsible for the analogy in Rev. 22², "And on this side of the river and on that was the tree of life, bearing twelve manner of fruits, yielding its fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations" (cf. Ezek. 47¹²).

In reference to the incident of the cursing of the fig tree (Mk. 11¹²⁻¹⁴ etc.) Tonkin says, "Some time ago

a philosopher and botanist, well known to the readers of this journal, taking me through his fine garden, pointed out that while every oak had its roots generously covered, other large trees had theirs bared to a depth, perhaps, of three feet. These naked ropes twined about some large rocks, as though the rocks had afforded anchorage when the storms had washed the soil away. But I was told it was a question not of storms but of birds. The oak has a seed too large to be swallowed with comfort by, say, a chaffinch or a tit. But the smaller seeds, such as those of the sycomore, were sown by the birds *on the top of the rock*. In a rainy season such seeds have both the nutriment and moisture enabling them to send filaments across the rock, and down the side, to mother earth ; after that, real growth can begin. But if the rock is not an isolated one—if it is a protuberance on a rocky shelf running a few inches under the level of the soil—the struggling tree will have a history similar to that of this fig tree.

“ Fig trees produce a small seed ! We read that they grow ‘ in many places *spontaneously*.’ And that means that birds will sow them wherever rocky protuberances (no less than the branches of other trees) invite them to. In a climate hot as that of Palestine such rocky places would serve, first, as a potent forcing-bed, later, as a pitiless death-trap. Jesus, as a boy, must have been familiar with such forced and fruitless growths. Our Lord cannot have been surprised that the tree in question bore no fruit, since ‘ it was not the season of figs.’ He was attracted by the premature foliage. He

half expected to see those leaves—as indeed they were—already slightly wilting in the sun. The disciples may fail to see the facts of the case, but to this lover of ‘bird and beast and the wild, open country-side,’ it is obvious that the scorched and shallow-rooted tree is under sentence of death ; a few more hours under a fierce sun must complete its destruction.”¹

THE CORNFIELD.

In ancient times there were no farms in the East as we understand the term, nor does the word “field,” which occurs several times in the Bible, represent our idea of a piece of land enclosed by hedge or ditch. On the contrary, the land surrounding each town or village lies as an unbroken stretch, as open common on which each man might have his allotment. It is these allotments which are called “fields,” and perhaps given a name, as, for example, the Field of Blood (Acts 1¹⁹), the Potter’s Field (Mt. 27¹⁰), and so on. These holdings were demarcated often by a large stone or a heap of small stones placed at the corners. The footpaths ran through or by the side of the fields, and were trodden hard by the constant passing of men and animals.

In Mt. 13²⁴⁻³⁰ we have the parable of the Wheat and the Tares. “The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man that sowed good seed in his field : but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares also among the wheat, and went away.” The tares are the Bearded

¹ S. Tonkin, *Expository Times*, vol. xxxiv. p. 323.

Darnel, a very common grass weed in the Orient. It is a kind of rye-grass, and is called *zawan* by the Arab, from the word *zan*, meaning "vomiting," for the effect of eating darnel is to produce violent nausea and sometimes death. In the earlier stages of its growth it is almost impossible to distinguish it from wheat; although when both have "headed out," the one is easily known from the other. Weeding wheat, according to Dr. Thomson, is common in Palestine; but the farmers make no attempt to distinguish the wheat from the darnel, and the roots of the two are generally so intertwined that it is impossible to separate them without plucking up both. The same writer declares that he never heard of any person in Palestine sowing darnel maliciously.

Though the framework of the parable was probably not suggested by any actual instance of darnel being sown in a field, the material may have been drawn to some extent from popular ideas. For there is a common Syrian belief that the appearance of *zawan* in the fields is due to the agency of the devil, and our Lord may very well have taken up this thought and used it to enforce a spiritual truth.

JESUS AND NATURE.

"The years at Nazareth must have been diligently used in the observation of the great book of nature, and of man, as well as of written revelation. The Gospels show, throughout, that nothing escaped the

eye of Jesus. The lilies and the grass of the field, as He paints them in the Sermon on the Mount ; the hen, as it gathers its young, in its mother's love, under its widespread wings ; the birds of the air, as they eat and drink, without care, from the bounty around them ; the lambs which run to follow the shepherd, but sometimes go astray and are lost in the wilderness ; the dogs so familiar in Eastern cities ; the foxes that make their holes in the thickets ; the silent plants and flowers ; the humble life of the creatures of the woods, the air, the fold, and the street—were all, alike, noticed in these early years of preparation.”¹

Many of these allusions to nature have already been noted, but there still remain a number of facts which provide the local colour for some New Testament references.

The *mustard* is mentioned three times by our Lord, and on each occasion with reference to the smallness of its seed, namely, Mk. 4^{31. 32} (cf. Mt. 13^{31. 32}, Lk. 13^{18. 19}), Mt. 17²⁰ and Lk. 17⁶. It is inferred from these passages that “small as a grain of mustard seed” was a familiar Jewish proverb.

“The common mustard of Palestine,” says Canon Tristram, “is *sinapis nigra* of the order *cruciferae*, the Black Mustard, which is found abundantly in a wild state, and is also cultivated in the gardens for its seed. It is the same as our own mustard, but grows, especially in the richer soils of the Jordan valley, to a greater size than in this country. We noticed its great height

¹ C. Geikie, *The Life and Words of Christ*, p. 240.

on the banks of the Jordan, as have several other travellers ; and Dr. Thomson remarks that in the Plain of Acre he has seen it as tall as a horse and its rider."

The *lily of the field* (Mt. 6²⁸ 29) is generally considered to be the brightly coloured anemone which flowers so abundantly in the spring as to cover the hillsides like a carpet. Particularly is it luxurious on the shores of the Lake of Galilee. Like the *grass* (Mt. 6³⁰), these flowers have but a short life. The "latter rains" at the end of the winter water the ground so thoroughly that when spring-time comes, with its pleasant warmth, all vegetation grows as if by magic, and for a few weeks the country is resplendently verdant. Then, within perhaps a week or ten days after the rains cease, the summer sun scorches the ground, "the grass withereth, the flower fadeth," and the delightful colours of the hillsides are exchanged for a dull brown ; the flowers are replaced by a rapid multiplication of insect and reptile life, and the dried grass is used as fuel for the household cooking.

It is the presence of the fauna in such numbers that makes life in the East during the hot season far from pleasant. There is a saying that under every third stone in Palestine there lurks a scorpion. *Scorpions* swarm in every part of the Orient, and are found in houses, in chinks of walls, among ruins, and under the loose stones of the mountain-side, so that it is unsafe to sit down in the open country before making a careful search for these pests. They are particularly abundant in the peninsula of Sinai, a fact alluded to in Deut. 8¹⁵.

Their venomous sting, sometimes fatal, is alluded to twice in the New Testament, namely, in Lk. 10¹⁹ and Rev. 9³.¹⁰. Our Lord's reference to the scorpion in Lk. 11¹², "Or *if* he shall ask an egg, will he give him a scorpion?" is said to be a Jewish rendering of the Greek proverb, "A scorpion instead of a perch."

The scorpions of Lk. 10¹⁹ are associated with *serpents*. The serpents of Palestine are numerous. The term "viper" is often used (Mt 3⁷ 12³⁴ 23³³, Lk. 3⁷, Acts 3²⁸). There is no clue to the species intended, but as the Hebrew word is derived from a root meaning "to hiss," it is concluded that they were venomous.

"Wheresoever the carcase is," said our Lord, "there will the *eagles* be gathered together" (Mt. 24²⁸). The reference is to the Griffon-vulture, which feeds on carrion. The sight of these birds congregating in the sky is a very common one in the Orient, and at once tells the observer that some dead body is attracting them. Like the dogs, they are natural scavengers, and, though to our Western mind they are repulsive creatures, they undoubtedly are useful. The passages in the Bible where this bird is mentioned nearly all speak of it as possessing noble qualities, for example, Is. 46¹¹, where it is used as a metaphor for Cyrus. These birds are still exceedingly numerous in Palestine.

Two references were made by Christ to the *fox*, namely, Lk. 13³² and Mt. 8²⁰. The character and habits of the Eastern foxes do not differ from those of the British species, but the various Scriptural allusions

are not always to that animal but to the *jackal*. Thus the line,

“Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vineyards”
(Cant. 2¹⁵)

probably refers to the jackals, whose depredations among the vines are well known. A fox is usually carnivorous, but in countries where flesh is scarce this rule does not always apply.

The *wolf* is frequently mentioned in Scripture, almost always as a symbol of ferocity, for example, Mt. 7¹⁵ 10¹⁶, Lk. 10³, Acts 20²⁹. Wolves are still the dread of shepherds in Palestine. They lurk about the folds, secreting themselves till dark, and then when opportunity occurs leap into them and seize their victim. This habit of the wolf of seeking its prey after sunset is often alluded to (Jer. 5⁶, Zeph. 3³, Hab. 1⁸).

The following articles also bear upon this section :

Agriculture in Palestine, vol. i. p. 260.

The Syrian Shepherd, vol. i. p. 289.

Vineyards in Palestine, vol. ii. p. 27.

The Climate of Palestine, vol. ii. p. 31.

The Olive Tree, vol. ii. p. 164.

The Sycomore Tree, vol. ii. p. 285.

The Ass, vol. i. p. 165.

Wells and Water, vol. i. p. 338.

JESUS IN THE TOWN.

THE BURDEN BEARER.

The *atal*, or burden bearer, is a very familiar figure in Eastern towns to-day, for the narrowness and roughness

of the streets is a bar to wheeled traffic, and these human carriers are used for the transport of every kind of merchandise. The weights they can lift and under which they will stagger for many a mile are truly amazing. During the War it was not an uncommon sight to see a bearer carrying as many as fifty petrol tins. They were empty, of course, but even so the weight and bulk were tremendous. And so high do burdens such as these tower, and such a surface do they offer to the wind, that a porter can be blown over and seriously injured by some sudden gust. That these men do not sprain their ankles or break their legs as they make their way across the rough surface of the Eastern streets is itself a marvel.

Their sole equipment is a stout rope about 5 yards long and a sort of harness which they fasten on their backs to act as a ledge on which the burden may rest. When loading up they crouch down with their backs against the burden, and, skilfully throwing the rope behind them, encircle it and, with a peculiar jerk, lift it on to their backs, emitting a loud expiratory grunt as they do so. If the load is too heavy or bulky for them to effect this manoeuvre, they stand with bent backs while others load them.

The burden bearers are a very degraded type both mentally and physically. Their immense strength lies in the muscles of their backs and lower limbs, and not at all in their arms. And so accustomed are they to the bent posture that eventually it becomes permanent, so that they are unable to hold themselves erect. Nor

can these men unload themselves ; on arrival at their destination they again stand patiently while their burden is removed. This is the thought in Ps. 38⁴ :

“ For mine iniquities are gone over my head :
As an heavy burden they are too heavy for me.”

While on the march they hold the rope across their chests, so steadying the load, and their whole manner and expression present a very pitiable spectacle.

Many are the references in Scripture to these men, but of them all none is so significant as the saying of our Lord, “ My burden is light ” (Mt. 11³⁰), in which it compared so favourably with that of the Pharisees and scribes, of whom He said, “ Yea, they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men’s shoulders ; but they themselves will not move them with their finger ” (Mt. 23⁴). One may picture our Lord making these remarks as He caught sight of an *atal* passing with his load.

THE MARKET-PLACE.

In Palestine every village has a path of communication leading through it to other places, and this thoroughfare, which is the central and the most open space, becomes the market-place. In fact, in many parts of Syria the arrival of a caravan with the laden animals makes the market wherever they happen to stop. Away in the distance will be seen the long line of the traders—sometimes a quarter of a mile in length, for all go in single file—and the news quickly spreads, so that

the whole village congregates for business and for exchange of news.

For the Oriental knows no business without its social side, and any bartering that is done is preceded by a long exchange of news and compliments and, often, by the offering of refreshment. Frequently the village fountain is in the centre of the market-place, and there the asses or the camels are watered, and by it other travellers rest with their baggage animals, and recount what has happened on the way.

In olden days the market-place was the centre of all public discussion. Thus Paul "reasoned . . . in the marketplace every day with them that met with him" (Acts 17¹⁷), and there the scribes and Pharisees congregated because they loved to have "salutations in the marketplaces" (Mk. 12³⁸, Lk. 11⁴³). It was to the rulers in the market-place that the masters of the maid with the spirit of divination dragged Paul and Silas (Acts 16¹⁹), and in the market-place the children played as they do to-day, mimicking the actions of their elders (Lk. 7³²). In the market-place, too, congregate the labourers waiting for a job (Mt. 20³), standing without any tools, and often idling the day away because they are too lazy to work or too inefficient to follow a regular trade. And frequently one hears angry altercations going on, such as that mentioned in Mt. 20¹², every one joining in, so that the volume of noise and imprecation is stupendous.

THE WATER SELLER.

The value, to the Oriental, of drinking water, can be really appreciated only by those who have travelled "in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is." For springs in Palestine are few and far between, and good water is scarce and precious. Indeed the Eastern has cultivated a palate for water comparable to that of the Westerner for wine, and he can tell at once from where a particular water has been taken. Nor do the water-sellers attempt to impose upon those whom they serve, but boldly cry out the source of their supply. So when David longed for the water of the well of Bethlehem, it would not be only on account of its association but also because of its peculiar taste (2 Sam. 23¹⁵).

The water-seller may vend his water either in an earthenware jar or a skin, the *kirby* of the Arabs. The former, being porous, is preferable, because the water keeps cool by constant evaporation. The vessel is provided with a long spout, which the water-seller tips over his shoulder, allowing the precious fluid to flow either into a brass bowl or directly into the mouth of the buyer. In the latter case, it is a punctilious point never to allow the lips to touch the orifice of the pipe.

The cry of the water-seller is distinctive, and the words of Is. 55¹ are in absolute harmony with the modern way : "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money ; come ye, buy, and eat ; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." For the Oriental nearly always offers

his wares at first as a gift, a form of pleasantry which is but a prelude to a heated discussion as to their real value.

“In India,” says James Neil, “and, no doubt, it was anciently the same amongst the pagan nations surrounding Israel, idolaters will often fetch water from far, and stand all day on the burning highways, offering it freely to passers-by in honour of their gods. This heathen custom lends peculiar force to the Saviour’s words that whosoever should give them a cup of water in His Name should not go unrewarded.”

Spring water in the East is spoken of as “living” in contradistinction to the stagnant stored water kept in the rain cisterns. This is the thought in Jn. 4¹⁰. It should be noted in connection with this episode that Oriental etiquette permits a man to converse with a woman at the well mouth, though such familiarity might be censured elsewhere.

On another occasion recorded in St. John’s Gospel, Christ refers to Himself as living water: “Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink” (Jn. 7^{37. 38}). Of this episode Canon Tristram writes: “As with the Feast of the Dedication, many ceremonies had become established which are not to be found in the Law of Moses. On each morning of the Feast of Tabernacles a procession with trumpets, headed by a priest, went from the Temple down the Kidron valley to the Pool of Siloam, where a golden pitcher was filled, and carried back to the Temple amidst

the shouts of the people. While the water was being poured into one silver basin, and wine into another, the Hallel (*i.e.* Pss. 113–118) was chanted by the whole assembly. They founded the custom on the words of Isaiah, ‘With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation,’ and the Talmud explains it, ‘They draw there the Holy Spirit of Jehovah, for a Divine breathing is on the man through joy.’ We may picture our Saviour, as St. John evidently does in memory, standing over the brow of the steep ravine by the golden gate of the Temple as the grand procession passes, and loudly proclaiming the gift of the true spiritual water, the living water, that could satisfy the spiritual thirst, as these libations from Siloam never could.”¹

MONEY CHANGERS.

The *saraf*, or money changer, is a very familiar figure in the East. He is seen sitting in the street behind his portable counter or tray mounted on a stand, on which are arranged specimens of varied currency in paper or metal, all protected from theft by wire-netting. He is a very necessary person, because the Oriental tradesman may offer change in the coins of half a dozen countries, so that no one can remain in an Eastern town many hours before he finds the services of the *saraf* essential. Nor is the inexperienced traveller long before he finds it is very needful to have his wits about him when doing business with the money

¹ H. B. Tristram, *Eastern Customs in Bible Lands*, p. 215.

changers, and most people will find themselves decidedly the poorer after their first dealings with them. For the varying rates of exchange, and the alteration of the value of certain coins after some specific date, enable the skilled financier to take advantage of the ignorant.

It would be the dishonesty of the money changers, and not simply the fact of their presence, that polluted the Temple in Christ's day (Mt. 21¹², Mk. 11¹⁵, Jn. 2¹⁴). Then, as now, many currencies were in circulation, particularly Phœnician, Roman, and Greek money; and, as the Jews from all over the world came to Jerusalem for the festivals, they brought with them every variety of coinage (cf. Acts 2⁹. 10. 11). Moreover, the Temple dues could be paid only in shekels and half shekels (see art. THE COINS OF THE GOSPELS, p. 40), so that money changers were really necessary. That Jesus drove them from the Temple, therefore, is practical evidence that they were dishonest. Doubtless they cheated the public as so many *sarafs* cheat the people to-day, and it is also likely that they paid a high rent to the authorities, who were willing to connive at their practices for the sake of their own purse.

But the money changers might also be bankers and money lenders. These were generally the wealthier members of the profession, who received money on deposit for purposes of investment, on which they paid interest, or who lent money out on interest (Mt. 25²⁷, Lk. 19²³). The rate of interest in ancient days was high, generally twelve to twenty per cent., while for short loans as much as three hundred per cent. might

be exacted. In Egypt thirty per cent. was usual ; in Greece twelve ; in Babylonia twenty.

“Small sums of money,” says Dr. Mackie, “are frequently lent and borrowed among Orientals on the strength of friendship and kinship. Very often they remain unpaid, and this light treatment of a promise within a privileged circle of relationship is easily extended to ordinary business engagements. When money is advanced, or goods are forwarded to a merchant on the guarantee of a mutual friend, if some plausible excuse can be found for non-fulfilment of contract, the mere breaking of one’s word is not regarded as disgraceful. The unforeseen obstacle is interpreted as something sent from above, and to be accepted with pious submission. The person imposed upon has no tribunal of business honour or public opinion to appeal to by which the defaulter might be put to shame and inconvenience, and prosecution would likely lead to a competition in legal bribery. The loser feels that his business capacity has been discredited by the transaction, and expatiates to sympathetic friends on the cleverness with which he has been duped (Lk. 16⁸).”¹

AN ORIENTAL STREET.

From the Jewish quarter in a modern continental city, or from the old parts of Eastern towns to-day, we may reconstruct with reasonable accuracy the streets of the Palestine towns and villages along which our

¹ G. M. Mackie, *Bible Manners and Customs*, p. 84.

Saviour walked with His disciples, streets so narrow that there is only room for two or three people abreast, and shaded with lumbering overhanging windows borne on timbers gnarled and stained with age, their mysterious lattices tightly closed, and the doorways bolted and barred, or, if opened for a moment to admit any one, shut again at once with an air of suspicious secrecy.

In these byways of the Eastern quarters veiled women and turbaned men wearing long striped and coloured robes are jostled by the patient donkeys laden with weighty panniers, and bearing on their backs the brightly dressed donkey boys, sitting crosslegged, and dexterously balancing themselves. The narrowness of the streets, designed to protect the people from the fierce sun, forbids wheeled traffic; but were the thoroughfares wide enough, their rough surfaces would offer a further bar. At night, therefore, a walk abroad is full of danger, and, unless one carries a lamp, a sprained ankle or a broken leg may easily result. This is the meaning of Ps. 119¹⁰⁵ :

“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet,
And a light unto my path.”

This, too, is the significance of Jn. 11^{9, 10}, “If a man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth.”

The shops are simple booths, open to the street, the shopkeeper squatting, with his feet tucked under him, among his wares. Often shop and factory are com-

bined, and, whether an order be for leather work such as shoes, or metal work such as bowls or jewellery, it can be executed "while you wait." All work is done sitting. Thus Matthew the tax-collector was found "sitting at the place of toll" (Mt. 9⁹, Mk. 2¹⁴). So Malachi pictures the Lord sitting as a refiner (Mal. 3³). So also Jesus found in the Temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting (Jn. 2¹⁴).

Every Oriental town and village abounds with hungry and half-savage dogs which wander about the streets at night howling dismally, and devouring the refuse matter which lies about in defiance of all laws of sanitation. For the Eastern knows little about public hygiene, and these animals are almost the only scavengers. Dogs, therefore, are regarded as unclean, and the ill-usage they receive drives them out by day into the open country, where they spend the greater part of their time amid the rubbish heaps which lie outside every city. So in Rev. 22¹⁵ there occur the words, "without are dogs"; and in Phil. 3², cruel, fierce, and filthy persons are likened to dogs.

Dogs, therefore, are not used as domestic pets, nor are they admitted into the people's houses, a fact which seems to contradict the local colour of Mt. 15²⁷, when the Canaanitish woman says, "Yea, Lord : for even the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table." But of this passage James Neil writes : "When quite young, however, as little puppies, these otherwise hated and ill-used animals are carried indoors, and

are fondled and fed by the children, but only when they are quite young. This our Saviour well knew, and so did the poor, much-tried Syrophœnician fellah, whose dauntless faith He has called us to admire: to give her hope, though a lowly hope, He said, 'It is not proper to take the children's bread and cast it to little dogs' [or puppies, *kunaria*, the diminutive of *kuon*, a dog]. To which she replied, as He intended she should, 'I beseech Thee, sir [*na kurie*], for even the little dogs [*kunaria*] eat from the crumbs that are falling from their lords' table.' It is greatly to be regretted that the translators should have mistranslated this word *kunaria*, 'dogs,' and so made our Lord apply what in the East is regarded as a dreadful epithet to this believing woman, and one which, instead of suggesting a hope for her, as the word He used really did, would have taken all hope away" (Mt. 15²²⁻²⁸).¹

A familiar figure in Oriental streets is the blind beggar. The usual types are mentioned in Lk. 14¹³: "The poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind." The last-named form a numerous class, for ophthalmia is terribly prevalent, being spread by the innumerable flies which are such a pest in the East. Blind beggars are referred to on several occasions in the Gospels, for example, Mt. 20³⁰⁻³⁴ 9²⁷⁻³¹, Mk. 10⁴⁶⁻⁵² 8²²⁻²⁶, Lk. 18³⁵⁻⁴³, Jn. 9¹⁻⁴¹. Indigent people such as these were to be found on the pilgrim routes, hanging round the houses of the well-to-do (Lk. 16²⁰) and the gate of the Temple (Acts 3²), just as to-day they loaf about

¹ J. Neil, *Everyday Life in the Holy Land*, p. 179.

all public thoroughfares and at the gates of continental cathedrals.

The mode of appeal may be a simple statement of poverty, enforced occasionally by an expressive gesture of drawing the forefinger across the teeth to show that no food is there (Amos 4⁶). More often the beggar claims alms on religious grounds, calling, "I am your guest. God will prolong your days," etc.; and, if refused, an equally pious rejoinder is given, such as, "The Lord will relieve you." This is the significance of Jas. 2¹⁵⁻¹⁶: "If a brother or sister be naked, and in lack of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Go in peace, be ye warmed and filled; and yet ye give them not the things needful to the body, what doth it profit?"

A great deal of Oriental almsgiving arises from the love of praise or from the superstitious hope that small sums given away may balance larger and illicit gains. This is partly the thought in Mt. 6¹⁻⁴.

The following articles also bear upon this section:

Blessings and Cursings, vol. i. p. 167.

Dogs in Palestine, vol. ii. p. 46.

THE SCENES OF JESUS' MINISTRY.

JUDÆA.

The geographical boundaries of Judæa have never been precisely identified. The territory occupied by the tribe of Judah, which, according to Josephus, was

the first to return from Babylon, was originally no more than a small tract of country immediately round Jerusalem. From this insignificant beginning the term "Land of Judah," came in Roman times to be used practically of the whole of Palestine. In our Lord's day the province extended from Samaria in the north to the desert of Arabia Petræa in the south, and from the Mediterranean in the west to the Jordan in the east.

The physical features of this area are sharply defined, and are customarily divided into five portions. The names, characteristic of these divisions, are: the "Maritime Plain," the "Low Hills" (called the *Shephelah*), the "Hill Country," the "Parched Land" (or *Negeb*), and the "Wilderness."

The Maritime Plain, varying in width from 10 to 16 miles, consisted of rich grain fields and excellent pasture. The coast is devoid of harbours, but it was the great international highway between Egypt and Syria, and on this important military and caravan road great cities came to be built. It was a section of Judæa, however, that had little association with the life of our Lord.

The Shephelah was the "Border Country" of Palestine, and, as such, the scene of outlawry and warfare. "Altogether," says Sir George Adam Smith, "it is a rough, happy land, with its glens and moors, its mingled brushwood and barley-fields; frequently under cultivation, but for the most part broken and thirsty, with few wells and many hiding-places; just the home for

strong border-men like Samson, and just the theatre for that guerilla warfare, varied occasionally by pitched battles, which Israel and Philistia, the Maccabees and the Syrians, Saladin and Richard, waged with each other." Apostles and evangelists entered this region soon after the first persecutions began at Jerusalem, and in its limestone caves numbers of hunted Christians found refuge.

The Hill Country, or "Mount of Judah," constituted the stronghold of the district, and, for the purpose of the present description, may be said to include the Negeb and the Desert. This area, between 1300 and 1400 square miles, consists of a high and broken table-land. It stands 2000 to 3000 feet above sea-level, and is surrounded by natural defences of extraordinary variety.

On the east are the Jordan valley and the Dead Sea, a great gulf which for ever isolated the Hebrews from the people "on the other side of Jordan." Across this deep gulf there are seen the hills of Moab, significantly named by the ancient dwellers in Palestine "The Mountains of Those Across."

On the south lies the Wilderness of Judæa, called in the Old Testament *Jeshimon*, "devastation," notable for its wild and savage grandeur. It is a tract, about 35 miles long and 15 broad, which is little better than a howling waste, incapable of cultivation except in a few favoured places. "When you climb the Mount of Olives, or any hill about Bethlehem, or the hill of Tekoa, and, looking east, see those fifteen miles

of chaos, sinking to a stretch of the Dead Sea, you begin to understand the influence of the desert on Jewish imagination and literature. It gave the ancient natives of Judæa, as it gives the mere visitor of to-day, the sense of living next door to doom; the sense of how narrow is the border between life and death; the awe of the power of God, Who can make contiguous regions so opposite in character. 'He turneth rivers into a wilderness, and watersprings into a thirsty ground.' The desert is always in face of the prophets, and its howling of beasts and its dry sand blow mournfully across their pages the foreboding of judgment."¹ This was "the land not inhabited," yet always in view from the Temple hill, into which the scapegoat, bearing the sins of the people, was led. Here John the Baptist was prepared for his austere mission, and here our Lord suffered His temptation.

The western boundary of Judæa was ideally the Mediterranean, but in actual history the people of Judah were confined for the most part to the Highlands, where they could enjoy a natural defence in the precipitous heights along the edge of the central range of hills. This great barrier, which repelled the Philistines even when they held the Shephelah, is penetrated by a number of gorges. It was therefore a country where ambushes and entanglements were easily organized, where large armies had no room to fight, and where the defenders could remain hidden.

The northern border of Judæa was its weakest side,

¹ G. A. Smith, *HGHL*, p. 314.

and as a frontier country it had to be strengthened by artificial fortresses. This area, therefore, became the scene of more battles than perhaps any other part of Palestine.

Owing to its geographical formation Judæa enjoyed many of the advantages—the sense of security and seclusion—which insularity confers. On the other hand, this is the explanation of much of its selfishness, its provincialism and bigotry.

“The sacred memories and thronging events which have been, and for ever shall be, associated with these holy hills cannot be fittingly expressed by voice or pen. In the long ages past the highways of this Judæan plateau have been trodden by the feet of patriarchs, prophets, priests, and kings, and for centuries its sanctuary on Mount Zion was the dwelling-place of Jehovah; but more than all else in its wonderful history, it was the place of the incarnation, the self-denying ministry, the agony, the death, the resurrection, and the ascension of the Son of God, the Saviour of the world.”¹

JERUSALEM.

A general view of Jerusalem from a height such as that of the Mount of Olives must have been an impressive sight in New Testament days. The most conspicuous objects would be the Temple, with its great colonnaded courts thronged with priests and worshippers, and the Fortress of Antonia, the acropolis of the city,

¹ R. L. Stewart, “Judæa,” Hastings’ *DCG*.

described by Josephus as standing on a rock 87 feet in height and having four corner towers, of which the loftiest rose to 120 feet above the foundations.

Behind the Temple and Fortress stood the upper city crowned by the magnificent Palace of Herod, which was flanked on all sides by towers at regular intervals. Its apartments and banquet halls held room for hundreds of guests ; its walls were decorated with rare marbles ; its furniture was of the most costly description, and the household vessels were of silver and gold. The Palace grounds contained beautiful groves and trees and a well-watered garden, the whole adorned with statuary and other embellishments of architecture.

Guarding the north wall of the Palace there stood three towers erected by Herod the Great, and dedicated respectively to his wife Mariamne, whom he murdered, to Hippius his friend, and to Phasaël his brother. These structures, built of huge blocks of white limestone, were so lofty and magnificent that they might have been palaces. Josephus states in his florid way that "they were for largeness, beauty, and strength, beyond all that were in the habitable earth." Their purpose was for military defence.

Between the Palace grounds and the Temple lay the gymnasium and the hippodrome, and closely adjacent to them the great amphitheatre of Herod. All around were the flat-roofed houses, closely packed together. The whole was guarded by two, or possibly three, walls, out of the masonry of which there sprang numerous towers.

The streets of Jerusalem were narrow and crooked, so that at times of disturbance, which were frequent in the Roman period, they were readily choked by the ill-disciplined crowds, and the people were trampled down and slaughtered without being able to defend themselves. This may have been the thought in Christ's mind when He said, "Let him that is on the housetop not go down to take out the things that are in his house," for safety lay rather in escape from roof to roof. The streets, too, were all paved, with their centres depressed as is the case to-day in so many Eastern towns, so that this central gutter, after heavy rain, becomes like a river, making the streets almost impassable. This possibly suggested the imaginative picture of the "river of water of life . . . in the midst of the street thereof" in Rev. 22¹.

The water supply of the city has always been of more than ordinary interest. There is only one natural spring, known to-day as the "spring of the Lady Mary," because of the tradition that the Virgin there washed the clothes of the infant Jesus. But there are several famous reservoirs or "Pools," in or near Jerusalem, which are rich in Biblical history. The Pool of Bethesda, described in John 5² as being "by the sheep gate," is not unanimously identified to-day. The Virgin's Fountain is the only intermittent spring in the vicinity of Jerusalem, and this is considered by many authorities a reason for locating the Pool of Bethesda there. Excavations may yet reveal the "porches" beneath the accumulation of débris at this

spot. Josephus states that the Pool of Siloam lay at the mouth of the Tyropœon valley, and describes it as a fountain with much sweet water; and this and the references of later writers point to the modern Pool of Silwan on the slope south of the Temple area. In New Testament days this Pool was surrounded by a covered arcade. The water is now very impure, though used by the inhabitants of the miserable village of Silwan.

Farther down the valley, at its junction with the valley of Hinnom, is a deep well known as "Job's well," which is near enough to Jerusalem to be reached easily on foot. From this well water is drawn all the year round and sold in the streets of Jerusalem, for this "living water" is always valued very much more than that stored in the rain cisterns. At a distance of some seven miles from Jerusalem are three other reservoirs, which are known as "Solomon's Pools," but are probably not later than Roman times. They are not used to-day.

It must not be thought, however, that the present Jerusalem is that known to our Saviour. The surface that He trod lies deeply buried, for the city has been destroyed and rebuilt so often that the valleys have been filled up with the débris of its ruins, and its ancient hills, in some cases, almost obliterated. It was a smaller town, too, than now, perhaps only one-fourth the size; and even to-day the whole city with its walls could be contained in Hyde Park and yet leave a margin all round. Nevertheless, the flat-roofed windowless houses

and the narrow streets presented much the same architectural character then as now, for the Oriental is intensely conservative, and, until very recently, has resisted change. The locality is the same; and the encircling hills and the open Temple space still remain; and the people have conserved their Eastern habits and character sufficiently for us to be able to visualize the Jerusalem of two thousand years ago.

JERICO.

The Gospel narratives have given us two vivid pictures connected with Jericho, one of the blind man who sat by the wayside as Jesus and His disciples drew near the city, and the other of Zacchæus, the prominent tax-collector with whom Jesus went to lodge. Jericho to-day is a small and rather squalid village, but the Jericho of our Lord's day was a large and beautiful city of considerable commercial and political importance. Josephus speaks of its excellent gardens thickset with trees, its balsam woods and palm groves, its plentiful and luscious fruits, and its luxurious dwellings. Herod the Great did much to strengthen and beautify it, erecting a palace, baths, theatres, and fortifying it with a citadel which he called *Cypros*, above the town. It was in Jericho that Aristobulus, the youthful high priest, was done to death at Herod's instigation, and it was in Jericho also that Herod died. After his death the Romans farmed the district round Jericho, and Zacchæus may have held his office

in connection with the imperial revenue from its soil.

The most direct road from Jericho to Jerusalem was a wild and solitary track, where travellers were much exposed to the attacks of robbers who had their haunts in the caves and cliffs flanking the road ; a fact which gives vividness to the parable of the Good Samaritan. A picturesque parallel to this story of highway robbery is given by Deissmann in a letter of complaint written by two merchants who were set upon by "certain malefactors between Polydeucia and Theadelphia, and bound, and assaulted with very many stripes, and stripped, and robbed."

BETHANY.

From Jericho there is an almost steady climb of 3000 feet up to Jerusalem. A plateau crowns the final ascent, and there, on the south-eastern side of the Mount of Olives, lay Bethany. It is significant that Jesus chose this little village for His home, for it was secluded and yet near to Jerusalem, and in the evening He could make His way over the hill to the quiet hamlet behind, and the rest and welcome that awaited Him in the house of Bethany. It now consists of a little group of about twenty wretched-looking houses, occupied by Bedawîn Arabs. "A wild mountain hamlet, screened by an intervening ridge from the view of the top of Olivet, perched on its broken plateau of rock, the last collection of human habitations before

the desert hills which reach to Jericho—this,” says Dean Stanley, “is the modern village of El-Azariyeh.” The tomb of Lazarus is shown there to-day, but its genuineness is extremely doubtful. Tristram says, “It is in the middle of the village, and most unlike the character and situation of Jewish sepulchres”; and Edersheim supposes Lazarus to have been buried in his own private tomb in a cave, and probably in a garden.

SAMARIA.

Originally the name of the city built by Omri, “Samaria” became, in a very short time, the designation of the kingdom itself. Its boundaries varied considerably at different periods, but in New Testament days they may be considered to have extended roughly as far as the edge of the Plain of Esdraelon on the north, the Jordan on the east, the eastern fringes of Sharon on the west, and on the south, a somewhat changeable line already noted as the Judæan frontier.

With its green verdure and abundant fruit the country presents a very striking contrast to the barren land of Judæa. Travellers speak enthusiastically of its beauties and its agricultural wealth, and only on the eastern side is the land rough and broken, or at all naked and barren. But its quiet pastorate and its absence of terrifying gorges and mountainous crags have not only rendered it accessible to foreign aggression, but have given its inhabitants a less stable character than their southern neighbours. Invaders have

generally found its conquest an easy matter, and thus it came about that, while Judah held out against the inroads of Syrian and Assyrian, the northern kingdom of Israel succumbed almost without resistance.

Judæa is isolated, and the Jordan ravine for ever separated it from the tribes that wandered on the other side. With Samaria, however, this is not so, for the Jordan river, where it flows along the level of the Esdraelon Plain, is easily fordable at many points, so that the passage from Samaria to Gilead was a comparatively easy one. Geographical contiguity was naturally followed by the mingling of the respective populations, and this was a contributory factor to the mixed blood of the Samaritan. This made them an object of contempt to the pure Jew, and the bulk of Jewish literature about Samaria is full of scorn for this traffic with foreigners.

The Pentecostal Church, "thrilled by the spirit of the Risen Christ," rose sufficiently above the national prejudice to carry the gospel to Samaria, and while Philip, Peter, and John probably laboured in the ancient capital itself, others evangelized in "many cities of the Samaritans" (Acts 8²⁵). Their labours met with some success, since the Church there "had peace, being edified; and, walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, was multiplied" (9³¹). Only once again do we find mention of Samaria in the New Testament, namely, in the account given by Paul and Barnabas at Jerusalem at the close of their first missionary tour. They record

the conversion of the Gentiles as they went through Samaria. From that time Samaria passes out of view.

See also art. THE SAMARITANS, vol. ii. p. 97.

GALILEE.

As in the case of Judæa and Samaria, the territory covered by the name "Galilee" varied from time to time, and cannot now be precisely defined. The name *Galil* signifies a "ring," and was originally applied to any circuit of towns and villages. Geographically the district known as Galilee had, as its southernmost border, the Plain of Esdraelon, on its western side the sea, on its eastern the Jordan, and on the north the great gorge of the Litany or *Kasimiyeh*. Politically the actual borders were mutable.

Within this geographical area, Galilee was divided into three portions: (a) the mountainous *Upper Galilee*, containing the highest peak in Western Palestine; (b) *Lower Galilee*, a pastoral country where hills do not exceed 2000 feet in height; and (c) *The Valley*, consisting of the Upper Jordan with its two lakes, Huleh and Gennesaret. All these districts are well watered, so that Galilee was noted for its natural wealth and fertility. Oil, wine, wheat, and fish were its principal products. "In Asher," said the Rabbis, "oil flows like a river," and "it is easier to raise a legion of olive trees in Galilee than one child in Judæa." The proximity of the Phœnician ports enhanced the value of all Galilean commodities.

While Judæa lay off the caravan routes, Galilee was covered with roads leading everywhere. "Of all things in Galilee," says Sir George Adam Smith, "it was the sight of these immemorial roads which taught and moved me most—not because they were trodden by the Patriarchs, and some of them must soon shake to the railway train; not because the chariots of Assyria and Rome have both rolled along them, but because it was up and down these roads that the immortal figures of the Parables passed. By them came the merchantman seeking goodly pearls, the king departing to receive his kingdom, the friend on a journey, the householder arriving suddenly upon his servants, the prodigal son coming back from the far-off country. The far-off country! What a meaning has this frequent phrase of Christ's when you stand in Galilee by one of her great roads—roads which so easily carried willing feet from the pious houses of Asher and Naphtali to the harlot cities of Phœnicia—roads which were in touch with Rome and with Babylon."¹

At the time of our Lord Galilee was a part of the Roman Empire. Roman garrisons were in towns all round the country, and Roman influence was everywhere felt. But the mass of the people had little to do with the Roman Empire directly, and the chief details of life were regulated by Jewish law, administered, probably, in synagogue courts. Josephus says there were two hundred and forty cities and villages in Galilee, and that the very least of them contained fifteen thousand

¹ G. A. Smith, *HGHL*, p. 430.

inhabitants. But this statement must be considered to be an exaggeration, for it would mean a population of some three millions. Half a million is generally accepted to-day as a fair estimate, and that is perhaps double the number now living there.

“The Galileans,” says Josephus, “are inured to war from their infancy, and have always been very numerous; nor has their country ever been destitute of men of courage.” Sir George Adam Smith describes their nature as “volcanic,” and sees in it a reflection of the volcanic character of the province, for hot sulphur springs flow by Tiberias, and earthquakes have been common. The Galileans had an ill name for quarrelling and sedition, and from them came the chief zealots and the wildest fanatics of the Roman wars; and we are reminded that two Galileans wished to call down fire from heaven on those who were only discourteous to them (Luke 9⁵⁴). Nevertheless “this inner fire is essential to manhood,” and the Galileans, according to the Talmud, “were more anxious for honour than for money,” and, in this respect, compared favourably with the Judæans.

How, then, did there arise the two well-known proverbs, “Out of Galilee cometh no prophet,” and, “Can any good come out of Nazareth?” “There does not seem to be any sufficient ground for the dislike and contempt in which the Galileans were held by their religiously stricter brethren of Judæa. Possibly they were less exact in their observance of tradition. But they were devoted to the Law, and their country was

well supplied with synagogues, schools, and teachers. If they were less orthodox, from the Pharisaic standpoint, the Messianic hope burned brightly in their souls, and they crowded to the ministry of Jesus. They were certainly more tolerant and open-minded than the Judæans, and it was from them that Jesus chose most of the men who were to give His teaching to the world."¹

NAZARETH.

Opinions have varied as to the ancient importance of Nazareth. It was the fashion at one time to insist on its seclusion and remoteness from the busy world of affairs, while later writers have gone to the other extreme and "pictured the boyhood of Jesus as within the busy arena of politicians, soldiers, merchants, and amid all the movements of that stirring time." There is truth in both views. Nazareth itself was a small unimportant place, quietly secluded, lying in its nest among the hills. But at the same time it was in the centre of a populous district, and within easy reach of the great highways of commerce. It was in touch with, though not agitated by, the currents of popular thought and the movements of the commercial and political life of the time.

The present village occupies only the foot of the hill on which the old town was built, and over which it grew. All around it are other hills of yellow limestone, bare of shrub or tree, and at times breaking into crum-

¹ A. W. Cooke, "Galilee," Hastings' *DAC*.

bling cliffs. But probably in our Lord's time the picture was more verdant, for geologists are of the opinion that the climate of Palestine has changed during the last two thousand years, and that in New Testament times the land was better watered than it is now.

The water supply of the village depends chiefly upon rain caught in a multitude of underground cisterns cut in the soft rock. But there is one spring, the famous "Virgin's Fountain," which the imagination of travellers has ever associated with the boyhood of Jesus. The actual spring is inside the Greek Church of the Annunciation, but it is conducted from there through a conduit to the arched stone fountain at which the villagers obtain their drinking supply. The open ground beside the fountain is the evening rendezvous of the shepherds who come that they may fill their leather "bottles" with that "living water" which is esteemed so much more than cistern water in the Holy Land, for Nazareth is the centre of a large pastoral district.

The view from the hills surrounding the town is panoramic. On the south is the Plain of Esdraelon, the scene of twenty battles; on the west Carmel, the ancient sanctuary of Canaan, the "gateway of the rains," and the famous cities of Phœnicia, with the Mediterranean beyond; on the east the Valley of Jordan and the long mountain range of Gilead; on the north the great caravan road to Damascus. One can see 30 miles in every direction, the whole "a map of Old Testament history."

The roadways seen from the Nazareth hills alone

must have fired the imagination of the boy Jesus. Across Esdraelon there emerged from Samaria the Jerusalem road, thronged at festival seasons with thousands of pilgrims. From the fords of Jordan came the Midianite bands of traders taking their commodities to Egypt as they did in Joseph's day. The caravan from Damascus wound round the foot of the hill on which Nazareth stood. Visible from another point was the highway between Acre and Decapolis, along which marched the Roman soldiery. Yet to-day there is no sign of any highway actually linking Nazareth with these main routes, and the ascent to the village is a steep, rough, narrow path.

After all, do we not prefer to think of the village as a "quiet retreat where the Son of Mary could grow to His wondrous manhood without a suspicion in the great world outside that such a miracle was ripening in its midst?"

THE LAKE OF GALILEE.

"Jehovah created seven seas," said the Rabbis, "but the Sea of Gennesaret is His delight." But whether modern opinion would corroborate this eulogy depends a good deal upon the time of year at which the lake is seen. Undoubtedly it is at its best in the early spring, when the hillsides, burnt in the summer-time to a dull brown colour, are bright with millions of gaily coloured anemones—the "lilies of the field." But it must be remembered that the lake now presents a very different

aspect from that which it had when our Lord sailed upon its limpid waters. In His day the hills were probably well wooded, the sea itself was filled with a thousand boats, the coast exhibited the spectacle of flourishing towns. To-day all is desolate. Hardly a ruin even is to be seen, and seldom a sail upon the water.

The climate of the lake might be expected to be intolerably hot, for it lies nearly 700 feet below sea-level, and the sun beats upon it with almost tropical fierceness. But cool currents of air sweep down the gorges that split up the mountains of its shores, at times freshening into the shortlived gales for which the lake is notorious. These storms are often very local, and may affect only a portion of the lake at a time. The northern end is the more exposed. The storms, again, are peculiar in that the wind appears to blow from several points at once, making the handling of a boat very difficult.

The lake, in shape like a pear, is about 13 miles long and 8 miles wide at its point of greatest breadth. Its maximum depth is some 150 feet, the shores sloping swiftly downwards. In the Old Testament it is referred to by the name of "Chinnereth" or "Chinneroth," which has been sometimes thought to have been given to the lake on account of its fancied resemblance to a harp, called *kinnor* in Hebrew. But this term is more probably derived from a town of the same name mentioned in Josh. 11² and elsewhere. Josephus calls the lake "Gennesar," and in the Gospels it is referred to usually as the "Sea of Galilee," though it is also called

the "Lake of Gennesaret" and the "Sea of Tiberias." On the west side of the lake there is a small plain known as el-Ghuweir, stretching along the shore for a little over 3 miles and about a mile in width, which is generally supposed to be the "land of Gennesaret" (Mt. 14³⁴, Mk. 6⁵³).

The industries of the district were agriculture, fruit-growing, dyeing, tanning, fishing, boat-building, and fish-curing. The fisheries, which were free, were pursued by thousands of families, who conducted a very profitable trade. From these our Lord drew His disciples, though it has been suggested that John, who had a house in Jerusalem (Jn. 19²⁷), and was personally acquainted with the High Priest (18¹⁵), was an agent rather than a fisherman.

THE FISHING OF THE LAKE.

The waters of the Lake of Galilee are full of fish as in Gospel days, but whereas Josephus speaks of a fishing-fleet numbering two hundred and thirty vessels, there are now not more than a score of boats.

Almost all the fish are caught by means of nets, of which the two chief kinds are the "cast net" and the "drag net." It is the former which is probably referred to in Mt. 4¹⁸ and Mk. 1¹⁶. This is a circular net with lead weights around the fringe, and usually with a cord attached to the centre. "When using this net," says Dr. Mackie, "the fisherman stands on the bank or wades breast-deep into the water, and skilfully

throws the net which he had arranged on his arm into the water in front of him. It falls in the shape of a ring, and as the lead weight drags it down, the net takes the shape of a dome or cone in sinking, and finally falls upon the fishes it encloses. The fisherman then dives down and draws the leads securely together, and carries net and fish to the bank."

The "drag-net" is of the same character as that used in herring and salmon fishing, with cork floats along the upper side and small lead weights along the bottom of the net. The net is paid out of a boat so as to form a large semicircle within which the fish are enclosed. In drawing in the net the fishermen take hold of the ropes attached to its lower and upper sides, and, pulling steadily upon them, bring the heavily weighted net to shore, "gathering of every kind" (Mt. 13⁴⁸).

"Although it does not do to argue too conclusively from modern customs to the ancient ones, there are one or two which throw some light on the narrative in John, chapter 21. There is, first of all, the unknown Stranger (ver. 4) on the shore, who tells the disciples where to cast the net. If then, as now, fishermen were accustomed to have their movements directed from the shore—at times, at any rate—it will explain the fishermen's ready response to the directions. Then it will be noticed that it is at dawn that the nets, if left out all night, are usually hauled in. The condition of Simon (ver. 7) is readily understood if the fishermen were accustomed to dive into the water to assist the progress of their nets along the bottom; and so, too, his plunging

in with his 'fisher's coat' to meet his Master appears, also, all the more natural and in keeping with the surroundings. The fishes described (ver. 11) as 'great' would probably be members of the carp (*Cyprinidæ*) family, which often exceed 2 feet in length. These, to-day, are particularly taken in the 'drag net' (ver. 8)."¹

THE CITIES OF THE LAKE.

The chief city of the Lake of Galilee was *Tiberias*, lying on the western shore about midway between north and south. It was the great watering-place of the Roman Empire, densely crowded with a pleasure-seeking population composed of all nationalities. The city was founded by Herod Antipas, a few years before the beginning of our Lord's ministry, and named in honour of the reigning Emperor. We are not told that Christ visited this city. *Tiberias* was particularly abhorred by pious Jews because it was built on the site of an ancient cemetery. *Magdala*, famous for its purple dyes, and *Emmaus*, the ancient Hammath (Josh. 19³⁵), with its medicinal springs, also appear to have been unvisited by Jesus. But if He never joined the throng of patients who came to Emmaus from all parts of Syria, there is little doubt that many of them swelled the great number who were laid at His feet.

Capernaum, now probably marked by the ruins at all Hum, at the north-western end of the lake, was the home of Jesus for the greater part of His public

¹ E. W. G. Masterman, *Studies in Galilee*, p. 42.

ministry in Galilee, and the scene of many of His mighty works. There is no doubt that it was an important place. Matthew calls it a "city," and we read of a centurion resident there—which presumes the presence of a garrison—and of a tax-collector and custom-house. There appears to have been a considerable boat-building and repairing industry carried on there also; a fact which has been suggested as one of the reasons of our Lord's settlement in Capernaum, and which would account for His being still spoken of as "the Carpenter" (Mk. 6³).

The excavations at Tell Hum have revealed the ruins of the finest and largest synagogue thus far discovered in Galilee, which may quite possibly be a part of the original structure built by the Roman centurion. White limestone blocks, which must have been brought from a distance, were used in its construction, and the interior of the synagogue was lavishly decorated. The building stood a few hundred feet from the shore, facing the waters, and from its terraces a superb view must have been had of the whole lake and its encircling hills. In front of the synagogue there was a platform, to which steps led up from the east and west, and from this platform a central door, with two smaller side doors, opened into the building. The length of the synagogue was 78 feet and its width 59 feet. The inner court was surrounded on three sides by rows of Corinthian columns on which there rested galleries.

Two miles north of Tell Hum, close to a wild volcanic gorge, are the remains of another Roman town, which

now bears the name of Kerazeh. This is considered to be the site of *Chorazin*. The ruins of this ancient town cover several acres and indicate that Chorazin was probably as large as, if not larger than, Capernaum. Here also the synagogue was the chief building, though it was not so magnificent a structure as that of Capernaum, and only the black volcanic rock of the district seems to have been used in its construction.

The village of *Bethsaida*, which Herod Philip raised to the dignity of a city, and named Julias in honour of Cæsar's daughter, lay on the northern shore of the lake, east of the Jordan, and is generally identified with the modern et-Tell. Here Jesus retired with His disciples when the news came to Him of the death of John the Baptist (Lk. 9¹⁰). To the south lies the rich, alluvial plain made by the delta of the Jordan. This plain is covered with green grass at nearly all seasons of the year, and fully accords with the description of the locality where the feeding of the five thousand took place (Mk. 6³⁹, Jn. 6¹⁰).

We must bear in mind the fact that it was in the midst of a great industrial centre that Jesus delivered His message. The coasts of Gennesaret were girdled with populous towns, with wharves, docks, factories, synagogues, and temples: Herod's palace at Tiberias; the colonnaded baths at Emmaus; at Taricheæ a hippodrome; at Gadara an amphitheatre, with the acropolis above—towns with paved streets, stone houses, and triumphal arches, an environment of Greek cities and Roman camps.

The following articles also bear upon this section :

The River Jordan, vol. i. p. 188.

Jericho, vol. i. p. 194

Bethlehem, vol. i. p. 286.

The Geography of Syria, vol. i. p. 306.

Phœnicia, vol. ii. p. 166.

JESUS' DEATH AND RESURRECTION.

PONTIUS PILATE.

Of Pilate's birth and parentage nothing is known. He became governor of Judæa in the year A.D. 26. He resided in the palace of Herod in Cæsarea with his wife Claudia Procula, who is mentioned by Matthew (27¹⁹). He came frequently, however, to Jerusalem, where he took up his abode at the palace of Herod the Great, known as the Prætorium, a magnificent building elaborately described by Josephus.

Before Pilate's appointment it had been the custom of the Procurators to fix their residence in the pleasant quarters at Cæsarea by the seaside, and to go up to Jerusalem only at the time of the Jewish Feasts, when their presence might be needed to keep order. When they did come to Jerusalem, mindful of the religious susceptibilities of the Jews, they used to leave behind them the idolatrous emblems which figured on the Roman standards. But Pilate ignored this wise concession, with the result that the whole city was in an uproar when the news spread that the *Bellorum Deos*

were profaning the Holy City. At once a deputation of Jews waited upon the new governor to plead for the removal of the hated symbols. Though threatened with death, they refused to go until Pilate grudgingly gave way after five days of tension. The images were removed and peace was restored, but ill-feeling remained on both sides. A subsequent attempt on the part of Pilate to set up in the palace tablets dedicated to the Emperor was interpreted as an attempt to introduce the cult of Cæsar-worship, and only an order from Tiberius compelled him to yield and thus avoid a sanguinary conflict with the Jews.

It is obvious from these early errors in administration that Pilate was not a suitable man for the position he occupied. "The fault," says Dr. Hillard, "would seem to rest with the central authority, which did not realize that in administering the small province of Judæa it had to deal not with the province alone, but with all the millions of Jews scattered throughout the Empire, profoundly earnest in religious convictions, regarding Judæa as the holy centre of all they held dearest, and maintaining direct communication with the Sanhedrin, to which the Romans themselves had allowed a certain authority over all Jews throughout the Empire. Hence, mistaking the nature of the work, they sent as procurators second-rate men who were often (like Pilate) nominees of Imperial favourites, and who were probably looking forward to their promotion from the moment that they landed in Cæsarea. Had Judæa been definitely attached to the province of

Syria, it would at any rate have been governed by men with a wider outlook.”¹

The next incident of importance in Pilate's career is of particular interest in that it would appear to have received the notice of our Lord Himself.

Honestly desiring to benefit Jerusalem, and stimulated doubtless by the architectural achievements of his royal predecessor, Pilate determined to construct an aqueduct, some 25 miles in length, which would convey water from the Pools of Solomon to the city. But, as funds were short, he appropriated the money in the Temple treasury, excusing his conduct on the plea that the proposed work was for the public benefit. Thus provided, he began the construction of the conduit, Caiaphas either agreeing to the diversion of the Corban or feeling himself unable to offer opposition.

But the people were not so pacific. A revolt at once occurred; the cessation of the works and the restitution of the Corban were demanded. Rioting became general, and in the quelling of the disturbance by the Roman legionaries considerable loss of life was entailed. Apparently the Tower of Siloam was part of the necessary building operations, for it fell at this time, and the death of the workmen crushed by its masonry was generally regarded by the Jews as a righteous judgment. It is this episode which is believed to be the key to the meaning of Lk. 13¹⁻⁵, and possibly also Lk. 14²⁸⁻³⁰: “For which of you, desiring to build a tower, doth not first sit down and count the cost, whether he

¹ A. E. Hillard, “Pilate,” Hastings' *DB* (one vol.).

hath wherewith to complete it? Lest haply, when he hath laid a foundation, and is not able to finish, all that behold begin to mock him, saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish."

The Galileans slain at this time were the subjects of Herod Antipas, Tetrarch of Galilee, and he was naturally displeased at the occurrence. He therefore "wrote to Pilate a letter of complaint, to which the Procurator replied in a spirit of conciliation, explaining the transaction, and justifying his soldiers in the circumstances. But Antipas was not convinced, and the relations between the two governors became strained. There were probably also other causes at work to create friction between them, such as questions of jurisdiction, or of boundaries between the districts, or of the occupation of the palaces at Jerusalem, where they both usually met at the feasts. This coolness continued until they were reconciled at the time of our Lord's trial" (Lk. 23¹²).¹

The end of Pilate's rule was brought about by a disturbance in Samaria. Tradition said that the vessels of the Tabernacle had been buried on Mount Gerizim, and a band of armed men escorted thither an impostor who promised to reveal them. Pilate sent troops to the spot, who, after a massacre, dispersed the multitude. Complaint was made to Vitellius, the *Legatus* of Syria, who seems at this time to have had authority over the governor of Judæa. Pilate was ordered to justify

¹ S. Buss, *Roman Law and History in the New Testament*, p. 199.

himself at Rome, but before he arrived there Tiberius had died, and Pilate was not reappointed. Eusebius states that he committed suicide, tradition fixing the tragedy in a lonely tarn near the summit of Mount Pilatus overlooking Lucerne.

THE CRIME OF MAJESTAS.

In Lk. 23² there occurs the threefold indictment brought about by the Jews against Jesus :

“ We found this man :

- (a) perverting our nation,
- (b) forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar,
- (c) saying that he himself is Christ a king.”

Of these three charges Pilate fixed upon the third, ignoring the first probably on account of its vagueness, and the second by reason of its falsity. The third, however, was a serious one, for it alleged the greatest crime possible against the Roman state—the crime of *Majestas* or High Treason.

It was called *Majestas* on account of the magnitude of the offence, and it embraced the following : “ Bearing arms against the State, levying troops without authority, sedition, mutiny, slaying a magistrate, deserting to the enemy, or causing a Roman army to be caught in ambush or surrendered to the enemy, preventing the success of the Roman arms, inciting a friendly state to make war on Rome, aiding an enemy with munitions of war, entering into communication with

the enemy, or giving him advice to be used against Rome.”¹

Under Tiberius, who was the reigning Emperor at the time of our Lord's trial, this law was made an instrument of terrible oppression. It was purposely vague and comprehensive, so that it might serve as a convenient way of removing an undesirable person ; and so, like the *lettres de cachet* of the French Bastille, it left no man safe. An act, a word, or a letter might be sufficient to ensure conviction, and the most trifling act of disrespect to the Emperor could be used as evidence for condemnation.

“Later Emperors considerably modified the oppressive application of this law. Mere verbal insults were not regarded as treason, and the emperors Theodosius, Arcadius, and Honorius are reported to have said that, ‘if the words were uttered in a spirit of frivolity, the attack merits contempt ; if from madness, they excite pity ; if from malice they are to be forgiven.’

“The charge of *Majestas* was worked in its most oppressive form during the reign of Tiberius. It was one which was difficult to refute. ‘Every one that maketh himself a king speaketh against Cæsar.’ No one could be permitted to assume such a title of his own will. Archelaus had done so, after the death of his father, and was refused the title for his presumption. It was the business of the emperor and the senate to make and unmake kings, and in all cases to be the

¹ S. Buss, *Roman Law and History in the New Testament*, p. 209,

fountain of honour. The very word 'king' had been hateful to the Roman people since the expulsion of the kings, and the establishment of the Republic. Julius Cæsar, though he desired to wear the kingly crown, thought it prudent to decline it when offered; and Augustus, with the same feeling in his mind, refused the similar title of 'Dictator.' Thus the very word itself was under a ban, and to claim it was a heinous offence. Whosoever did so was guilty of High Treason, guilty of the *Crimen læsæ majestatis*."¹

THE COCK-CROW.

In Mk. 13³⁵ there occur the words: "Watch therefore: for ye know not when the lord of the house cometh, whether at even, or at midnight, or at cock-crowing, or in the morning."

In the East the shrill cry of the wakeful fowl serves as a "striking clock," for the people have an absolute belief that the cock crows at precise times, namely, the first crowing at about 9 p.m., the second at midnight, and the third about 3 in the morning. Thus in the Talmud it is prescribed that at cock-crow the following benediction shall be used:

"Praised be Thou, O God, the Lord of the World, that givest understanding to the cock to distinguish between day and night."

This belief coincides with the time-table of Mk. 13³⁵,

¹ *Roman Law and History in the New Testament*, p. 210.

for in New Testament days the night was divided into four watches of three hours each. Roughly, the "night" was computed as lasting from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m., so that the 3 a.m. cock-crow would correspond with the interval between "midnight" and "morning."

Each of the four Evangelists records the fact that on the night of the betrayal Jesus warned Peter that before the cock crew he would thrice deny his Lord, and each of them records a crowing of the cock after the denial. Of these four accounts the second, that of Mark, specifically mentions two cock-crowings, and it has been suggested that the first was the 3 a.m. crow and the second the morning crow, thus implying an interval of three hours between; but most commentators agree that the 6 a.m. cock-crow is the only one referred to.

"While the domestic fowl was quite familiar to the Jews of our Lord's time, both the Mishna and the Midrash state that so long as the Temple stood, the breeding or keeping of cocks in Jerusalem was forbidden, on the ground that by scratching in the earth they dug up unclean things, thus spreading the contagion of Levitical uncleanness, and even contaminating the sacrifices of the altar. On this ground exception has sometimes been taken, especially from Jewish sources, to the statements of the Evangelists as to the crowing of the cock in Jerusalem on the night before the Crucifixion. But if such an ordinance existed, it is very unlikely that it could be strictly enforced in a city like Jerusalem, with a large and mixed population.

In particular we must remember that cock-fighting was one of the favourite sports of the Romans; and the Roman soldiers of the garrison would concern themselves very little about any Jewish prohibition of this kind.”¹

Rihbany states that the common people of Syria house their chickens in a small enclosure which is usually built immediately under the floor of the house. It has one small opening on the outside, which is closed at night with a stone, and another opening on the inside, through which the housewife reaches for the eggs. So “the evening crow,” the “midnight crow,” and the “dawn crow” can be very conveniently heard by members of the household. “And how often,” he says, “while enjoying a sociable evening with our friends at one of those humble but joyous homes, we were startled by the crowing of the cock, and said, ‘Whew! it is *missleil* [midnight].’ The hospitable host would try to trick us into staying longer by assuring us that it was the evening and not the midnight crow.”

Perhaps the same custom obtained in the home where Jesus lived. That fowls were a familiar sight is evident from the reference in Lk. 13³⁴: “how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her own brood under her wings, and ye would not!”

¹ J. C. Lambert, “Cock-Crowing,” Hastings’ *DCG*.

CRUCIFIXION.

Death by crucifixion was a form of capital punishment which arose in the East, where it was practised by the Persians, by the Phœnicians, and by the Egyptians. It was probably adopted by the Romans from the Carthaginians, and it was reserved for slaves, provincials, and the lowest class of criminals. It was a capital crime to put any Roman citizen to death by crucifixion. "It is a crime," says Cicero, "to bind a citizen of Rome; a desperate crime to beat him; to slay him is almost parricide; how then shall I speak of his crucifixion? There is no word in the Roman tongue that can describe it worthily." Thus it was that Paul was beheaded, whereas Peter and other apostles were crucified.

There were several kinds of crosses. The primitive form was the *crux simplex*, a single post set upright in the ground to which the victim was fastened, or a sharpened stake upon which he was impaled. The latter method, though terrible to witness, seeing that the stake issued through the victim's mouth, was really the more humane, as death must have been rapid.

The Roman cross was more elaborate. It was called the *crux compacta* and had three forms; the *crux commissa* (St. Anthony's cross) resembling the letter T; the *crux decussata* (St. Andrew's cross) like an X; and the *crux immissa*, in which the upright passed through the transom, as usually depicted in Christian art. In this form there was generally a peg in the middle of the

upright post, on which the victim was set astride. The height of the cross was not much more than that of an average man.

The victim was treated throughout with the greatest ignominy. He was compelled to carry the transom of the cross to the place of execution, a herald preceding him bearing a board on which was written a statement of the alleged crime, while soldiers drove the wretched prisoner with goads and scourges. Sometimes the tablet of accusation was hung round the neck of the victim. When the place of execution was reached, four soldiers were detailed by a centurion to strip the victim, his garments being considered the perquisites of the executioners (Mt. 27³⁵). He was then laid upon the cross, and his hands and feet were either nailed or tied. The former was preferable, for though the pain was greater, the subsequent suffering was lessened as death was hastened. For the torture of the cross lay in the cruel exposure to the Eastern sun and the maddening effect of hunger and thirst. Sometimes death did not release the sufferer for several days. But more often a merciful *coup de grâce* was given by a spear thrust or a blow from a mallet. Much, doubtless, would depend upon the humanity of a single soldier, who might skilfully administer a death-blow while appearing only to torment the victim by cruel play.

It was the custom in Jerusalem to provide some alleviation for these physical tortures by the administration of a stupefying draught, and it is said that the ladies of the city made this their special care. Such a

draught was offered to Jesus, but He refused it because He was bent on doing to the last the work that had been given Him to do. The "vinegar" offered to Him was the sour wine supplied to the Roman soldiery when on duty. This was proffered in raillery. Jesus, in their eyes, was a pretender to the Jewish throne and a rebel against the Imperial government, and so they joined in the gibes of the rulers and mockingly drank His health (Lk. 23³⁶).

If crucifixion was hateful to the Romans and Greeks, it was much more so to the Jews. For it was the belief of the Jews that any one who had been put to death by crucifixion came under the curse of God's Law. That was how they understood the passage in Deut. 21²³, which Paul quotes in his Letter to the Galatians: "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (3¹³). We do not understand what "cursed" meant to the Jew. We do not feel the bite of it. But the Jew understood it, and felt the power of it. There was a Jewish saying that Abraham was accustomed to sit at the mouth of hell in order to prevent any of his descendants from passing to that place of torment. But if any one of his descendants was "cursed," then Abraham could do nothing. He had simply to stand aside and let him pass to his own place.

This was the stumbling-block of the Cross to the Jews. One who had died by crucifixion, they said, and so had come under the curse of the law, could not be their Messiah. But Paul turns their own argument against them. Christ did, by the very mode of His death, come

under that dread curse, but He did so "for us." The curse has been borne, and the Law is silent now. The curse has been taken away, and the blessing remains. "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us . . . that upon the Gentiles might come the blessing of Abraham in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3¹³).

A ROCK-HEWN TOMB.

The physical geography of Palestine has been the determining factor in the manner of Jewish sepulture, for the country is one long limestone ridge of rock which is soft and easily worked. It is also a land of caves, and these doubtless suggested the use of the common rock-hewn tomb.

Of these tombs there were at least two main varieties. The most prominent form was an excavation in the rock, roughly shaped to the human body and covered with a slab of stone lying flat upon the ground. This is the reference in Lk. 11⁴⁴: "Woe unto you! for ye are as the tombs which appear not, and the men that walk over them know it not." So easily indeed was this done that, at the time of the Passover, when the pilgrims journeyed to Jerusalem from all parts of the country, these tombs were specially whitewashed, that they might be seen readily. For the ceremonial defilement occasioned by an accidental contact would debar any one from taking part in the Feast.

A second variety of rock-hewn tomb was a chamber excavated in the limestone rock face, containing recesses

in which the bodies were laid, or shelves on which they were placed. This was the type in which our Lord was laid. Such tombs were often situated on the family property, for the Jews greatly feared to be buried away from their own people; the dread of being deprived of this privilege was, it is said, one of the causes of their hatred of the sea. To allow a stranger to be interred in the family vault was an act of extraordinary magnanimity (Mt. 27⁶⁰).

The protection of these rock-hewn tombs was effected by making the doorway small so that a person had to stoop to enter (Lk. 24¹², Jn. 20⁵), and by placing over the aperture a round stone like a great grindstone set on edge. This stone ran in a groove which sloped down to the doorway, making the closure easy, but the reverse process difficult. Thus, when the women came to the sepulchre where Jesus was laid, they asked each other on the way, "Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the tomb?" (Mk. 16³).

"A tomb was never opened save for a fresh interment. It is this that gives point to Paul's saying (Rom. 3¹³; cf. Ps. 5⁹): 'Their throat is an open sepulchre,' that is, at every opening of their mouth they bury, by slander and detraction, some one's fair fame" (R. Bruce Taylor).

The following articles also bear upon this section:

The Feast of the Passover, vol. i. p. 79.

Covenants, vol. i. p. 103.

The Sanhedrin, vol. iii. p. 207.

The Rending of Garments, vol. iii. p. 79.

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

THE PRIMITIVE APOSTOLIC CHURCH.

(ACTS i. 1-vi. 7.)

THE DISPERSION.

AT the apostolic period Jewish colonies were to be found in practically every part of the known world. This dispersion of the Jewish race began as early as the eighth century B.C., when the Assyrians overran the Northern Kingdom of Israel, and deported many of the people, and it continued during the subsequent centuries, sometimes by force, and sometimes, as in the case of those Jews who fled to Egypt in the days of Jeremiah, by voluntary emigration.

The list given in Acts 2⁹⁻¹¹ of places from which the Jews had assembled for the Feast of Pentecost is an indication of the widespread nature of the Dispersion. It extended westward as far as Spain and eastward to the borders of Mesopotamia, while the numbers who occupied these distant parts were so great that contemporary historians stated there were "infinite myriads" beyond the Euphrates, and the Jewish population of Egypt totalled no less than a million.

These "Hellenists," as the Jews of the Dispersion were called, remained true to their ancient faith. They

made regular pilgrimages to Jerusalem at the times of the great festivals, and they sent their annual tribute to the Temple. This they entrusted to men of good repute who were appointed in almost every town to receive it and convey it to its destination. They also regarded Jerusalem as their capital, though they looked upon the countries where they happened to be born as their own particular fatherland.

“Thus widely,” says Dr. David Smith, “were the Jewish people scattered abroad, and their dispersion served to facilitate the diffusion of Christianity. The heralds of the Gospel were themselves Jews, and their mission, like their Lord’s, was not to overthrow the ancient faith, but to proclaim its fulfilment. It was no small advantage that, wherever they went, they found an audience which could understand their message ; and in every town which they visited they repaired immediately to the Jewish synagogue, and there preached the glad tidings. The Gospel was indeed a message of universal grace, but the providence of God had prescribed the apostolic procedure—‘ both to the Jew, in the first instance, and to the Greek.’ ”¹

PROSELYTES.

One pronounced effect of the Dispersion was the influence which the Jews exerted upon the countries of their adoption. “They won multitudes of the heathen to their faith. This may, indeed, seem

¹ David Smith, *The Life and Letters of St. Paul*, p. 7.

surprising in view of the prevailing sentiment of the pagan literature of the period. Cicero terms the Jewish religion 'a barbarous superstition,' and grave historians impute horrible iniquities to 'the filthy race,' charging them not merely with sloth inasmuch as they did no work each seventh day and devoted each seventh year to idleness, but with the practice of ridiculous and monstrous rites—the worship of an ass's head, and the annual sacrifice of a Gentile stranger. And the Roman satirist not only makes merry over their abhorrence of swine's flesh, but, like Tacitus, accuses them of hatred of the rest of mankind. All this, however, represents merely the sentiment of the cultured classes; for they knew Judaism only by common report, and naturally despised it as an alien thing, the creed of a turbulent race in frequent insurrection against the imperial rule. In truth their animosity was an unwitting tribute; for it was provoked, as they betray in the midst of their revilings, by the successful proselytism of the Jews. 'Among the masses,' says the Jewish historian, 'there has long been much zeal for our religion; nor is there any city, Greek or barbarian, nor a single nation where the custom of our seventh day of rest from labour has not come into vogue; and the fasts and the lamp-lightings and many of our prohibitions regarding food are observed.' Nor is this a mere patriotic boast. 'So far,' says the philosopher Seneca, 'has the usage of the accursed race prevailed that it is now received throughout all lands; the conquered have given laws to the conquerors.'

And in the reign of Honorius (395–423 A.D.) the poet Claudius Rutilius Numatianus actually wished that Judæa had never been subdued by Pompey and Titus ; for then the pestilence would not have spread so widely, and the conquered nation would not have oppressed its conquerors. Women were especially impressionable, and it is recorded that in the time of Nero the women of Damascus were all, with a few exceptions, captivated by the Jewish religion. It appealed mainly indeed, as Josephus observes, to the lower orders ; yet it won not a few ladies of rank even in the imperial capital, like Fulvia, that Roman lady whose pious generosity was so grossly abused, and Nero's unhappy empress, Poppæa Sabina. Nor were there lacking men of exalted station who embraced the Jewish faith, like the chamberlain of Candace, the Queen of Ethiopia, Azizus, King of Emesa, and Polemo, King of Cilicia.”¹

Three conditions were imposed upon the new converts to Judaism, namely, circumcision, baptism, and sacrifice. The sacrifice was an expression of thanksgiving and an outward token of the individual recognition of the place of the Temple in the Jewish ritual. Baptism was necessary because the heathen were “unclean” and therefore needed cleansing, and neither of these conditions offered any great obstacle. But the rite of circumcision was a different matter, and many converts quailed before the operation. Such were not true proselytes, but were termed “God

¹ David Smith, *The Life and Letters of St. Paul*, p. 5.

fearers," and "worshippers of God," and "devout persons" (Acts 10².²² 13¹⁶.²⁶.⁵⁰ 16¹⁴ 17⁴.¹⁷ etc.). These lived, as it were, on the fringe of Judaism and sometimes were its generous benefactors, such as the centurion who built the synagogue (Lk. 7^{2ff.}).

It is said that the Jews never really reconciled themselves even to the proselytes who accepted the condition of conversion in full, and that they considered them "as great a plague as leprosy." Nevertheless they very much disliked to see them detached from the synagogue and joining the Christian Church. Yet such apostasy from Judaism could be easily understood, since Christianity offered the Gentile all and more than Judaism did, and that without any of those conditions of ritual to which they found it so hard to conform.

THE DAY OF PENTECOST.

According to Jewish tradition, the Day of Pentecost was the anniversary of the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai. It was also called "The Feast of Weeks" (Exod. 34²²), "The Feast of Ingathering" (Exod. 23¹⁶), and the "Day of First-fruits" (Num. 28²⁶). The name "Pentecost," meaning "the fiftieth day," refers to the interval from the Passover, while the terms "Feast of Ingathering" and "Day of First-fruits" indicate the character of the festivals. It was a very popular feast, almost as many Jews assembling at Jerusalem for it as for the Passover.

Indeed, more Jews came from a distance, probably because the season of the year was more favourable for travel.

The special sacrifices enjoined for this feast are detailed in Num. 28²⁰⁻³¹. The distinctive peculiarity of Pentecost was the presentation of the two wave loaves, which were made in a particular manner. The wheat was brought to the Temple, threshed and passed through twelve sieves, and from the flour thus obtained two omers were measured out for the two loaves. Care was exercised that the flour for each loaf was taken separately, kneaded with lukewarm water and separately baked. The loaves were made on the evening preceding the festival, unless that was the Sabbath, when they were prepared two evenings before. In shape they were long and flat and turned up at the corners, and they weighed about $5\frac{1}{4}$ lbs. each. Contrary to the common rule of the sanctuary, these loaves were leavened.

The festival lasted for one day, though the later Jews allowed two days for it on account of the difficulty those of the Dispersion experienced in ascertaining exactly the day of the Palestinian month. It was a day of holy convocation, when no servile work could be done, and it was especially regarded as a day of thanksgiving. Thus it was enacted that after the ceremony of the wave loaves each should bring such a freewill offering as he could afford, and the afternoons and evenings were spent in the festive meal, held within the Temple precincts, to which the poor, the stranger,

and the Levite were bidden as the Lord's welcome guests (Lev. 23²², Deut. 16^{10. 11}).

The following articles also bear upon this section :

The Church Meetings, vol. iii. p. 258.

Church Organization and Ministry, vol. iii. p. 297.

THE FIRST PERSECUTION.

(ACTS vii. 8—viii. 3.)

THE STONING OF STEPHEN.

The opponents of Stephen appear in the first place to have challenged him to public discussion, for we are told that they disputed with him (Acts 6⁹), and it was because they were worsted in these public arguments that they set themselves to procure a legal conviction against him on the charge of blasphemy. Witnesses were easily found who, for payment, or on account of their fanatical hatred, were prepared to give the necessary evidence. Capital punishment, however, could not be carried out without the consent of the Roman governor, so that it was necessary for the Jews to formulate some other and additional charge against Stephen in order to wreak their vengeance to the full.

It happened that at this time the Procuratorship was vacant. Marcellus was present in Jerusalem as Procurator, but he could not exercise a prerogative which belonged only to a regularly appointed Prefect. "Some," says Lewin, "probably advised caution, and that, as

there was no Procurator, there could be no execution ; but the bolder part insisted that, as the Procuratorship was vacant, the consent of the governor was impossible, and therefore to be dispensed with. During this hostile attitude of the two parties arrived the Feast of Pentecost, 9th May, A.D. 37. Vitellius, who was *en route* with his army for Petra against Aretas, was at Jerusalem, and during his sojourn he would keep the peace, in the absence of a Procurator, among the assembled multitudes. But on the fourth day of his stay, and therefore about the 22nd of May, came the news, like a thunderbolt, that the gloomy and suspicious Tiberius, of whom the world stood in awe, was no more. The whole face of things was changed in a moment. Vitellius abandoned his campaign against Petra, dispersed his army to their quarters, and returned to Antioch. The Jews were not only without a Procurator, but were released also from the presence of the Syrian Prefect. The fear of Tiberius was no longer before their eyes, and the successor on the throne of the Cæsars was a novice, who would be slow to take an affront at the very commencement of his reign."

The enemies of Stephen felt that they could proceed with the charge. Pressure was brought to bear upon the authorities, and he was arrested, brought before the Sanhedrin, and thereafter executed by the orthodox method of stoning.

The mode of execution was this. "After sentence had been pronounced, the criminal, in the absence of further evidence sufficient to establish his innocence,

was preceded by a herald or crier, whose function it was to announce, in terms of prescribed formula, the name and parentage of the offender, and the nature of his offence, together with the names of the witnesses. The place of execution was outside the town. On his arrival there, he was divested of his clothing, apparently by the witnesses, a loin cloth alone being left him. Failing a natural eminence somewhere in the vicinity, he was placed on a platform twice the height of a man. It was then the duty of one of the witnesses to precipitate him violently to the ground, in the hope that the force of the concussion would produce a fatal effect. In the event of this effect not being attained, the second witness was to cast a heavy stone on his chest. If he survived this treatment, the bystanders completed the dispatch of the unhappy victim by stoning him.”¹

The immediate consequence of the events of this day was a persecution in which Saul himself may have been the prime mover. And so the Church received its first experience of that which was to be a constantly recurring feature of its life throughout the next three hundred years. The details of this persecution are not given; no names of the martyrs are mentioned, but the severity of the persecution can be measured by the fact that the church in Jerusalem was, for a time at least, entirely broken up. “And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church which was in Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad

¹ W. S. Montgomery, “Stoning,” Hastings’ *DAC*.

throughout the regions of Judæa and Samaria, except the apostles " (Acts 8¹).

The following article also bears upon this section :

The Sanhedrin, vol. iii. p. 207.

THE MISSION TO SAMARIA.

(ACTS viii. 4-40.)

THE SAMARITANS.

The bitter quarrel between the Jews and the Samaritans, which was at its climax in New Testament days, dated many centuries back. The commencement of the hostility may be said to lie in the period when the dominion of Solomon divided, and the northern portion seceded from the Davidic house and from the Temple worship. But the bitter religious antagonism which the Jew felt for the Samaritan dated definitely from the time of the Restoration. The Jews who had sat at the feet of Ezekiel returned with the fervent belief that they were a holy and peculiar people, and when they reorganized their theocratic state it was with the firm intention of remaining separate from all other nations.

The Samaritans, who were blood relations, expected to be included in the new family and share in its religious observances. But the Jews accused them of being mongrel, and placed them outside the pale. Some scholars maintain that this accusation was an exaggeration. The Assyrian conqueror, Shalmaneser, or,

according to the inscriptions, his successor Sargon, deported only the most influential of the Samaritan families, while the proportion of Assyrian colonists must have been relatively small. Thus only an unreasonable exclusiveness could refuse to the Samaritans a right to the sacred name and tradition of Israel. Be that as it may, the Jews refused the aid of the Samaritans in the rebuilding of their Temple, with the result that the latter built one for themselves on Mount Gerizim and there established a Mosaic form of worship.

Josephus alleges that this rival worship was begun by a renegade Jewish priest, Manasseh, the High Priest's brother, who had married the daughter of a Cuthæan satrap; and that, when Antiochus Epiphanes desecrated the Temple of Jerusalem, the Samaritans denied that their Temple was erected to the Jewish Yahweh, and offered to name it the Temple of Jupiter Hellenius. He therefore applauds the zeal with which the Maccabees attacked Samaria and sacked it.

Josephus also states that in the year A.D. 10 a party of Samaritans contrived to enter the Temple of Jerusalem at night during the Passover, and defiled the cloisters by throwing dead bodies about. In retaliation for this outrage, the Jews publicly cursed the Samaritans in the synagogues. The Samaritan reprisals included the killing of Galilean pilgrims on their way to the annual festivals at Jerusalem, and the interference with the beacon fires which the Jews lit on the hilltops as signals to those of the Dispersion that

feast days were due. The Jews replied by classing the Samaritans with the heathen, and declaring that to eat their food was equivalent to the eating of swine's flesh.

In the Roman wars the Samaritans made common cause with the Jews and endured great sufferings, and over 11,000 of them, preferring death to surrender, were massacred on Mount Gerizim by the soldiers of Vespasian. In later days they persecuted the Christian Church with ferocious rancour. To-day they are reduced to a small community—"forty families" is the phrase—who still sacrifice on their sacred mount, where they comprise, so it is said, the smallest sect in the world.

THE CONVERSION OF SAUL.

(ACTS ix. 1-3.)

TARSUS.

Tarsus, in the words of St. Paul, was "no mean city" (Acts 21³⁹). It was the metropolis of Cilicia and the Western capital of the Province of Syria-Cilicia. Situated only three-quarters of a mile from the sea, on a navigable river, the Cnydus, the city attained great commercial importance. On its coins Tarsus is represented as a figure seated amid bales of merchandise, because it was in its warehouses that much of the wealth of Asia Minor was stored before it was dispatched to Italy and Greece. Vessels bearing treasure from

Europe unloaded at its wharves. Down the river the great timber baulks from the forests of Taurus were floated to the Mediterranean dockyards, and the busy scenes in the streets and markets of Tarsus made an impression on the mind of the youthful Saul which would seem to be reflected in his writings. Says Farrar, "The dishonesty which he had witnessed in its trade may have suggested to him his metaphors of 'huckstering' and 'adulterating' the word of life (2 Cor. 2¹⁷); and he may have borrowed a metaphor from the names and marks of the owners stamped upon the goods which lay upon the quays (Eph. 1¹³ 4³⁰), and from the earnest money paid by the purchasers" (2 Cor. 1²²).

But Tarsus was also celebrated as a seat of philosophy. It was, in the time of Saul, the world's principal seat of learning, and was considered to be superior even to Athens or Alexandria. Students flocked to it from all parts of the world, and the names of such of its sons as Nestor, Diodorus, and Dionysius brought it a deserved fame. On the other hand, there was also much in the pagan professional world to be despised—"cliques of jealous *savants*, narrow, selfish, unscrupulous, base, sceptical, impure—bursting with gossip, scandal, and spite. The 'thrones' of these little 'academic gods' were as mutually hostile and as universally degraded as those of the Olympian deities, in which it was, perhaps, a happy thing that they had ceased to believe. One illustrious professor cheated the state by stealing oil; another avenged himself on an opponent by epigrams; another by a nocturnal bespattering of his

house ; and rhetorical jealousies often ended in bloody quarrels. On this unedifying spectacle of littleness in great places the people in general looked with admiring eyes, and discussed the petty discords of these squabbling sophists as though they were matters of historical importance. We can well imagine how unutterably frivolous this apotheosis of pedantism would appear to a serious-minded and faithful Jew ; and it may have been his Tarsian reminiscences which added emphasis to St. Paul's reiterated warnings—that the wise men of heathendom, ‘alleging themselves to be wise, became fools’ ; that ‘they became vain in their disputings, and their unintelligent heart was darkened’ (Rom. 1²¹. 2²²) ; that ‘the wisdom of this world is folly in the sight of God, for it is written, He who graspeth the wise in their own craftiness’ ; and again, ‘the Lord knoweth the reasonings of the wise that they are vain’ ” (1 Cor. 3¹⁹. 20).¹

It was his birth at Tarsus that determined the trade to which the Apostle was put. The staple manufacture of the city was the weaving of the hair of the Sicilian goats into tent cloths, ropes, and garments. It was necessary that a Rabbi should have some means of livelihood, for his Rabbinical duties were supposed to be gratuitous. Moreover it was a Jewish maxim that every boy should learn a trade. “He who does not teach his son a trade teaches him to be a thief,” says the Talmud. Honest work was a sacred obligation, and so we find in later life that the Apostle frequently

¹ F. W. Farrar, *The Life and Work of St. Paul*, p. 19.

exercised his skill as a tent-maker (Acts 18³; cf. 1 Cor. 4¹² 9⁶, 1 Thess. 2⁹, 2 Thess. 3⁸).

A RABBINICAL COLLEGE.

At the age of fifteen Saul would leave home in order to be admitted into the Rabbinical College, known as the "House of Interpretation," at Jerusalem. There were many of these institutions, but that at Jerusalem naturally held a foremost position. And, because at this time the great Rabbi Gamaliel the elder, was the "Principal" of the Jerusalem College, it stood even higher than usual in the estimation of the people.

Gamaliel was the grandson of Hillel the Great, who had been "distinguished by the gentleness of his disposition and the liberality of his sentiments." That Gamaliel inherited these excellencies is borne out by contemporary evidence of which the episode in Acts 5³⁴⁻⁴⁰ is by no means the least convincing. He was one of the four Doctors of the Law who were awarded the title of Rabban, or Rabboni, a particularly honourable form of the designation Rabbi (cf. John 20¹⁶), and so warmly was his memory cherished that a saying was current after his death that "from the day when Rabban Gamaliel the elder died, the glory of the Law ceased, and purity and abstinence died." Little wonder that the Apostle referred to his old teacher with pride (Acts 22³).

The study of any Rabbinical College was the sacred Scriptures, *i.e.* the Law, the Prophets, and the Writ-

ings. The method was known as Midrash, a term which meant the interpretation and investigation of the text. This investigation was divided into two heads: the one dealing with the systematization of the precepts of the Law, the other elaborating the historical portions of the Scripture. A fourfold meaning was sought in every exegesis: the literal meaning, the suggested meaning, the meaning evolved by investigation, and the mystic meaning. Such theological teaching would be expected to be subtle and often fantastic, and its effect on the Apostle's writings has been a favourite theme of scholars. Examples are suggested in 1 Cor. 10¹⁻⁴, Gal. 3¹⁶ 4²¹⁻³¹, Rom. 3¹⁰⁻¹⁸ 9¹⁵ etc. In such passages the mere words of a writer seem to be considered as conclusive authority quite apart from their original application, and the words and letters of Scripture appear to be regarded as "divine mysterious oracles which might not only be cited in matters of doctrine, but even used to illustrate the simplest points of contemporary fact." They are considered, therefore, to be typical examples of Rabbinical argument.

In all Rabbinical Colleges a great deal of pains was taken with the cultivation of memory, and a Rabbi, whose mind was well stored with the sayings of the wise, was described as "a well-plastered cistern, filled with the water of knowledge, out of which nothing could escape." Josephus says that "from the very dawn of understanding" a Jewish child "learned the Law by heart and had it, as it were, engraved upon his soul." And so the method of study consisted in

repetition, and proficiency lay in the faithful reproduction of the actual words of the teacher.

The following articles also bear upon this section :

The Scribes, p. 50.

Jewish Education, p. 23.

The Pharisees, p. 43.

ST. PETER'S COMMISSION TO THE GENTILES.

(ACTS ix. 32-xi. 18.)

JOPPA.

“Jaffa,” says Dr. Thompson, “is one of the oldest cities in the world. It was given to Dan in the distribution of the land by Joshua, and it has been known to history ever since. It owes its existence to the low ledge of rocks which extends into the sea from the extremity of the little cape on which the city stands, and forms a small harbour. Insignificant as it is, and insecure, yet, there being no other on all this coast, it was sufficient to cause a city to spring up around it even in the earliest times, and to sustain its life through numberless changes of dynasties, races, and religions, down to the present hour. It was, in fact, the only harbour of any notoriety possessed by the Jews throughout the greater part of their national existence. To it the timber for both the Temples of Jerusalem was brought from Lebanon ; and no doubt a lucrative trade in cedar and pine was always carried on through it with the nations who had possession of the forests of Lebanon.

Through it also all the foreign commerce of the Jews was conducted until the artificial port of Cæsarea was built by Herod. Hither Jonah came to find a ship in which to flee from the presence of the Lord, and from it he sailed for Tarshish."

To the ancient Greeks Joppa was known as the place where Andromeda was exposed to the sea monster. By primitive fancy the fury of the sea was ascribed to sea serpents and dragons. Certainly the coast is exceedingly dangerous, and the imagination shudders at the tragic possibilities of this treacherous port. Yet it was this unpromising harbour that tempted the warlike dreams of the Maccabees, and it is recorded as one of the military and political achievements of Simon Maccabæus that "amid all his glory he took Joppa for a haven and made it an entrance for the isles of the sea" (1 Macc. 13²⁹).

But this conquest had also a religious aim. In those "great days" the Jews thought to purge Joppa of its heathen population and people it with "such men as would keep the Law." But their hopes were frustrated by their implacable fanaticism. The Hellenized population fought against the imposition of so strict a Judaism and intrigued for the return of the heathen rulers, who permitted them to worship in their own fashion. Twice the Syrians retook the town, and twice the Maccabees retook it. Then, after twenty years of Jewish possession, came Pompey the Roman general in 63 B.C., and decreed that it should be free. This edict was ratified by Julius Cæsar, who ordered "that the city of Joppa,

which the Jews had originally when they made a league of friendship with the Romans, shall belong to them as it formerly did." Later, Augustus added the town to other cities which were assigned to the kingdom of Herod the Great.

Joppa therefore became and remained a Jewish stronghold. Nowhere in Palestine was a place to be found more zealous for the Law, or more hostile to the Gentile influence. Nowhere was the contrast between clean and unclean more marked. Yet in this town Peter received the vision which taught him that "Jew and Gentile, as spiritually equal before God, must be impartially welcomed into the Church of Christ."

Dean Farrar suggests that Peter had already abandoned Rabbinic scrupulosities, since he chose to reside in the house of a tanner. "The daily contact," he says, "with the hides and the carcasses of various animals necessitated by this trade, and the materials which it requires, rendered it impure and disgusting in the eyes of all rigid legalists. If a tanner married without mentioning his trade, his wife was permitted to get a divorce. The Law of levirate marriage might be set aside if the brother-in-law of the childless widow was a tanner. A tanner's yard must be at least 50 cubits distant from any town, and it must be even farther off, said Rabbi Akiba, if built to the west of a town, from which quarter the effluvium is more easily blown. Now, a trade that is looked on with disgust tends to lower the self-respect of all who undertake it, and although Simon's yard may not have been contiguous

to his house, yet the choice of his house as a residence not only proves how modest were the only resources which Peter could command, but also that he had learnt to rise superior to prejudice, and to recognize the dignity of honest labour in even the humblest trade."

HEROD'S PERSECUTION OF THE CHURCH.

(ACTS XI. 19-xii. 25.)

AN EASTERN PRISON.

Although little that is definitely authoritative is known of prison architecture and prison routine in the days of the New Testament, so conservative is the East that there is reasonable probability that a visit to an Oriental prison to-day will reveal a very similar picture to that which we should visualize in the case of an imprisonment of the Apostles.

On several occasions the present authors visited such places in the East. Filth, squalor, wretchedness, utter neglect, and a complete absence of sanitation sum up one's first impressions. When one passes through the gateway from the street into the prison it is to pass from sunlight and life to darkness and deadliness. The buildings are ruinous, so that as one walks round the "battlements" it is sometimes necessary to cross great gaps in the masonry through which a fall of 40 or 50 feet is possible. The prisoners are herded together in the daytime in an open courtyard, and there they pass the day without any shelter from the pitiless rays of the

summer sun or the cold rains of the winter. From early morning to evening they are there without any occupation save such as they can discover for themselves. Some lie inert. These may be deadly sick with malaria, perhaps dying. Some pace restlessly to and fro ; others quarrel and fight. Criminals, whether priests, soldiers, brigands, or ordinary civilians, are thus mixed in horrible incongruity. Be the offence great or small, it makes no difference. A universal misery is the common tie. Over these wretched beings are placed sentries who walk to and fro on top of the precipitous walls.

“ Is there a doctor in the prison ? ” we asked, when once visiting an Eastern prison.

“ A doctor ? No. Why should there be one ? ”

“ They get ill, one supposes ? ”

“ But yes.”

“ Malaria, dysentery, are no doubt common ? ”

“ Plenty.”

“ Do they get medicine if they are ill ? ”

“ From where would it be procured ? ”

“ Do many prisoners die ? ”

“ Three or four a week,” was the casual reply.

We visited the condemned cell. Great chains were attached to the floor and to a being that could hardly be called human. The condition of man and chamber defied description. The stench was frightful. The guide drew our attention to a beam that protruded from the wall of the tower we were then in and above the solitary window in the cell. He then made a gesture of a rope being placed around the neck. A second

gesture pictured the condemned man being pushed through the window. A third described the end.

Roman prisons, which seem to have been built all over the Empire on a standardized plan, consisted of two parts. Of these parts the first was a chamber opening from the outer offices and surrounded by cells. From this ward there was a passage to an inner prison where stood the stocks in which prisoners were sometimes secured. This apartment had no other opening than the doorway, and was therefore in absolute darkness.

"The horrors of this inner prison," says Dr. Cunningham Geikie, "are often dwelt upon in the story of the early Christian confessors. Its awful darkness, its heat, and stench, were fearful, as may be well supposed; for prisoners were confined in it, night and day, without either exercise or renewal of the air. But there was a still worse dungeon, the Tullianum, so called from the original prison at Rome, on the back of the Capitoline Hill, facing the Forum, to which a steep flight of steps leads from it. A narrow stair goes down to this dismal pit, from the level of the prison entrance; but, long before I saw it, water had risen in the lower depths, and cut off all access to them. The upper prison is only some rough stone arches; but the dungeon below must have been beyond description horrible. A round hole in the floor was, in antiquity, the only entrance to it; prisoners being, we may suppose, let down into it, as Jeremiah was into his prison in the miry pit."

HEROD AGRIPPA I.

Agrippa I. was the grandson of Herod the Great. His father was Aristobulus, who was executed in 7 B.C.; his mother Berenice, the daughter of Salome. He himself was educated in Rome, where he narrowly escaped his father's fate through making some indiscreet remark about the Emperor Tiberius. As it was, he lay in prison for about a year before he was set at liberty. The change in his fortunes coincided with the accession of his friend Caligula. He was then given a chain of gold corresponding in weight to the one he wore in captivity, and was sent to Palestine with the title of Tetrarch. Continuing to enjoy the Imperial favour, he was granted other tetrarchies in addition to his original territory, and when Caligula died, Agrippa's possessions were further enlarged by the gift of Samaria and Judæa. He then ruled over a greater dominion than any previous Jewish king.

In the splendour of his good fortune, Agrippa remained a true friend to the Jews, and through all the chequered scenes of his life, and amid all his extravagance and dissipation, he seemed to carry with him a genuine attachment to the observance of the Mosaic Law. It was he, for example, who succeeded, at great personal risk, in dissuading Caligula from erecting a statue of himself in the very Holy of Holies in the Temple of Jerusalem, and it was "to please the Jews" that he persecuted the Early Christians, executed James, and apprehended Peter (Acts 12^{1ff.}).

The tragic manner of Agrippa's death is related in Acts 12²⁰⁻²³. Josephus stated that the occasion was the celebration of games in honour of Claudius, but the "set day" of verse 21 has been otherwise explained.

"This festival," says Lewin, "possesses so much interest, from its connection with our own country, that we may be excused for stating the occasion of it. In A.D. 42, for the first time since Julius Cæsar, the Romans, under Aulus Plautius, invaded Britain. It creates a smile to read that the legions were with difficulty prevailed upon to cross the ocean, as Britain lay beyond the limits of the habitable world. By the summer of A.D. 43, Plautius had defeated Caractacus, and slain Togodumnus, the two sons of Cunobelin, the late king of the Trinobantes, the most powerful people of the island; and Camulodunum, or Colchester, their capital, lay at his mercy. The intelligence was conveyed to Claudius, and, eager to wear the laurels which his general had won, he sailed from Ostia to Marseilles, traversed Gaul to Boulogne, crossed into Britain, and joined the army of Plautius on the banks of the Thames. The Emperor ostensibly assumed the command, drove the enemy before him, and took Colchester. He was only sixteen days in Britain, when he returned to Italy to celebrate his triumph. He reached Rome the beginning of A.D. 44, and nothing proves more clearly how formidable were our ancestors than the rejoicings at Rome and throughout the Empire on the result of the campaign. To have visited so remote and barbarous a country was an enterprise in itself; but to have won

a victory there, and sacked the capital, was a feat of arms almost unparalleled. Claudius was repeatedly saluted 'Imperator'; he was called 'Britannicus'; the same name was conferred on his son; the palace was surmounted by a naval crown; an arch was erected at Rome on the spot whence he had commenced his journey; and another at Boulogne, from which he had sailed. A triumphal procession was conducted with the utmost splendour, and his wife, Messalina, accompanied the pageant in a gorgeous "carpentum," or state carriage, especially decreed to her on the occasion. To commemorate the event, an annual festival was instituted at Rome, and chariot-races, beast-fights, athletic exercises, and war-dances were exhibited, and (which was unusual) in two theatres at once. The fulsome adulation of the provinces was not wanting, and the glorious return of the Emperor was celebrated with little less magnificence in the theatre at Cæsarea. Agrippa, who had received such benefits from the Emperor, was not likely to lose an opportunity of testifying his joy at his patron's successes, and he repaired to Cæsarea, to increase the splendour of the scene by his royal presence."¹

The following account of Agrippa's death is given by Josephus: "Now when Agrippa had reigned three years over all Judea, he came to the city Cæsarea, which was formerly called Strato's Tower; and there he exhibited shows in honour of Cæsar, upon his being informed that there was a certain festival celebrated

¹ T. Lewin, *The Life and Epistles of St. Paul*, vol. i. p. 110.

to make vows for his safety. At which festival a great multitude was gotten together of the principal persons, and such as were of dignity through his province. On the second day of which shows he put on a garment made wholly of silver, and of contexture truly wonderful, and came into the theatre early in the morning ; at which time the silver of his garment, being illuminated by the fresh reflection of the sun's rays upon it, shone out after a surprising manner, and was so resplendent as to spread a horror over those that looked intently upon him ; and presently his flatterers cried out, one from one place, and another from another (though not for his good), that he was a god ; and they added, ' Be thou merciful to us ; for although we have hitherto revered thee only as a man, yet shall we henceforth own thee superior to a mortal nature.' Upon this the king did neither rebuke them, nor reject their impious flattery. But, as he presently afterwards looked up, he saw an owl sitting on a certain rope over his head, and immediately understood that this bird was the messenger of ill tidings, as it had once been the messenger of good tidings to him ; and fell into the deepest sorrow. A severe pain also arose in his belly, and began in a most violent manner. He therefore looked upon his friends, and said, ' I, whom you call a god, am commanded presently to depart this life ; while Providence thus reproves the lying words you just now said to me ; and I, who was by you called immortal, am immediately to be hurried away by death. But I am bound to accept of what Providence allots, as it pleases God ; for

we have by no means lived ill, but in a splendid and happy manner.' When he said this, his pain was become violent. Accordingly he was carried into the palace; and the rumour went abroad everywhere that he would certainly die in a little time. But the multitude presently sat in sackcloth, with their wives and children, after the law of their country, and besought God for the king's recovery. All places were also full of mourning and lamentation. Now the king rested in a high chamber, and as he saw them below lying prostrate on the ground, he could not himself forbear weeping. And when he had been quite worn out by the pain in his belly for five days, he departed this life, being in the fifty-fourth year of his age, and in the seventh year of his reign."

ST. PAUL'S FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY.

(ACTS xiii. 1-xiv. 28.)

CYPRUS.

Cyprus is one of the largest and most fertile islands in the Mediterranean. In ancient times it was a place of considerable importance. It was early famous for its timber and its copper—two sources of wealth which no longer exist there. The word "copper" is derived from the name "Cyprus," because it was from Cyprus that the ancient world first obtained this useful metal. It was exported to Syria, Egypt, and Europe, and when mixed with the tin brought by the Phœnicians from

Cornwall, it provided the material from which both weapons and ornaments were made.

At the time of the apostles the island was part of the Roman Empire, having become subject thereto in 57 B.C.; and like all other parts of that Great Empire it contained a number of Jews. These people were attracted to Cyprus by the commercial advantages it offered, and particularly because of the great copper mines which had been granted to Herod the Great by Augustus for the sum of 300 talents. So great a Jewish population indeed came to reside in Cyprus that in the reign of Trajan, A.D. 117, they rose upon the natives and attempted to gain control of the island, slaying, it is said, thousands of their fellow-citizens. This revolt was suppressed by Hadrian with awful severity, and thereafter no Jew was allowed to set foot upon the shores of Cyprus on pain of death, and, even if a Jew were shipwrecked upon the island, he might plead in vain for mercy.

From Salamis, where the Apostle landed, to New Paphos is about a hundred miles, the main road following the coastline. Salamis itself contained several synagogues, where, it is recorded, "they proclaimed the word of God" (Acts 13⁵). It is unlikely that they laboured amongst the pagan population, for the licentiousness of the Cypriots was a byword among the nations of the ancient world, and the Apostle's message would gain little hearing among them.

"The later history of the Cyprian Church," says James Strahan, "lacks distinction. The legendary

discovery of St. Matthew's Gospel in the tomb of Barnabas in Salamis gave the Patriarch of the island the right to sign his name in red ink; and the council of Cyprus was convened for the purpose of forbidding the reading of the books of Origen."

THE COUNCIL OF JERUSALEM.

(ACTS xv. 1-33.)

THE GENTILES.

The contrast between Israel as "God's Chosen People" and the rest of the world runs right through the Old Testament, and, as Hebrew monotheism came more and more into conflict with the polytheism of the other nations, the latter came to be considered as "outside the pale." The hostility with which the Hebrews regarded the Pagan was, of course, modified from time to time by political alliances and by the development of trade, and did not reach its fanatical climax until after the captivity in Babylon. It was then that Ezra formulated his programme of exclusion, and it was at the time of the Restoration that marriage with non-Israelites was so sternly forbidden. Henceforth the Jews were to be a "Holy People" and to be separate from all other nations.

This separation was intensified by the Pharisaic movement (see art. p. 43); and, as the Pharisees were the leaders of public opinion in Palestine, the pious Jew came to look upon it as a duty to hate and despise the

Gentile with fanatical fervour. From John 18²⁸ we learn that if a Jew entered the house of a Gentile he was ceremonially unclean for the rest of that day. In Acts 10²⁸ we read that "it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to join himself or come unto one of another nation," that is to say, familiar intercourse with Gentiles was forbidden. No pious Jew would sit down at the same table with a foreigner (cf. Acts 11³, Gal. 2¹²) ; and were a Gentile to be invited to a Jewish house, and left alone in a room, everything in it became unclean.

Business dealings with Gentiles were forbidden, except under certain conditions, such as the ceremonial purification of articles that had been bought from them. At the same time the stricter Jew would not condescend thus far. Dr. Edersheim says that if a weaving shuttle was known to have been made of wood grown in a grove devoted to idols, not only had the shuttle to be destroyed, but all the product of that particular loom was equally defiled and useless. So terrible indeed was this intolerance of Gentiles that a Jewess was actually forbidden to give assistance to a heathen neighbour who was about to become a mother.

The Pagans naturally retorted. The Sabbath, the worship of the invisible Yahweh, the rite of circumcision, the Jewish horror of swine, and other Jewish peculiarities were to them a never-ending source of ribaldry. In the days of Hyrcanus, a pig was put surreptitiously into a box and introduced into Jerusalem ; Caligula attempted to offer swine's flesh on the Temple altar. If the Jew did not deign to conceal his

contempt for the "unclean" Gentile, the latter did not lose an opportunity of irritating the Hebrew fanatic.

As the first Christian converts were Jews, and as Christianity itself was first expressed through the Jews, the problem of the admission of the Gentile was an early one in the Church's experience. It was natural that at first Judaism and Christianity should march hand in hand, and that it should be thought necessary to accept Christianity through Judaism. But the admission of Gentile converts without the rite of circumcision, and the consorting together of Jewish Christian with the ceremonially unclean, occasioned the inevitable cleavage. As Gentile Christianity increased, Judaistic Christianity decreased, so that Jerusalem ceased to be the centre of ecclesiastical authority. "When Christianity and Judaism gradually separated it was as if a mighty river had changed its bed; a feeble current still crept along the old channel, but the main, the perennial stream, flowed elsewhere."

ANTIOCH IN SYRIA.

The city of Antioch in New Testament days bore little resemblance to the miserable modern Turkish town of some 6000 inhabitants. Then it was the third metropolis in the world, and the residence of the Imperial Legate of Syria. It had a population of perhaps 250,000, and its architectural splendours were in keeping with the magnificence of its natural position. It stood on the northern slope of Mount Silpius, and the broad

Orontes river carried shipping to and from the Mediterranean, which was only 16 miles distant.

Broad bridges spanned the river, on the banks of which stood baths, villas, theatres, basilicas, and other handsome buildings. Herod the Great had gratified his passion for architecture by adorning Antioch with a fine corso, adorned with trees, colonnades, and statues, that ran through the entire length of the city. Under the spreading plane trees were Greek and Roman gardens decorated with the skilled refinement of those luxurious civilizations.

A striking feature of the city was the great sculptured rock known as Mount Silpius, a colossal crag which had been carved to represent the face of Charon, the grim ferryman of the Styx. In the days of Antiochus Epiphanes, a pestilence had swept over the city and, to appease the gods, the king had ordered the sculptor Leios to hew this mountain mass into one vast statue.

The intellectual reputation of the Antiochenes was on a par with the splendour of their town. According to Cicero, Antioch enjoyed a high reputation for learning and culture, but, as with other Oriental towns of this type, she united therewith the prevailing licentiousness of the pleasure-loving Romans and Greeks. "The morals of Daphne, her tutelary deity," says Gibbon, "were proverbial; and so enervating was the abandon that Avidius Cassius, the hardy general of Marcus Aurelius, whose tragic rebellion served only to illustrate the magnanimity of the philosophic Emperor, made it a penal offence for a soldier to visit the place. The

corruption of Antioch tainted the whole world, and the Roman satirist deploras the flood of pollution which the Orontes poured into the Tiber."

The people of Antioch were further distinguished for that form of humour which delights in the invention of nicknames. "It is related that, when the Emperor Julian the Apostate visited the city in the course of his march to the East, he angered them by injudicious interference with their market, and they avenged themselves by shouting abuse after him in the streets. The long beard which he wore, in emulation of his revered philosophers, was an especial object of their ridicule. They termed him 'the Goat,' and exhorted him to 'cut it off and weave it into ropes'; and they styled him also 'the Butcher,' because he was continually sacrificing oxen at the altars of his heathen deities" (David Smith). They called the devotees of Cicero "Ciceronians"; those of Pompey, "Pompeians"; the attendants of Cæsar were given by them the name of "Cæsarians," and by similar process of verbal wit it is recorded in Acts 11²⁶ that "the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch."

This title, though now the most honourable in the world, was given in derision, and remained a contumelious epithet for many years after its origination. The new converts did not themselves use the name at first, but preferred to call themselves "the disciples," "the believers," "the elect," "the saints," "the brethren," and similar designations; but, by the end of the first century, the word "Christian" was transfigured by

their virtues in the world's estimation, so that they acknowledged the term proudly.

ST. PAUL'S SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY.

(ACTS xv. 34—xviii. 22.)

MACEDONIA.

Macedonia became a Roman Province in 146 B.C. Prior to that it had been the fountain of a great Empire. Philip of Macedonia (359–336 B.C.) had seized the occasion when Greece was weakened by the dissensions of her city states, and had consolidated a group of hardy races into a united kingdom. Creating the most effective fighting machine known to antiquity, the phalanx, he began that series of conquests which terminated in the extraordinary achievements of his son, Alexander the Great. And though at the death of Alexander the World Empire was dissolved, the Macedonians still retained enough of their pristine strength and courage to give a Hannibal to the world.

But on 22nd June, in the year 168 B.C., Perseus, the last successor of Alexander, was routed by the Romans, and Macedonia was disarmed and divided. The Roman commission at Amphipolis decreed that the State should be broken up into four regions. The first of these was *Macedonia Prima*, which, beginning eastwards at the river Nestus, extended to the Strymon, the modern Struma. The capital was Amphipolis. The second was *Macedonia Secunda*, which, reaching

to the Axios, had Thessalonica as its capital. Pella was the capital of *Macedonia Tertia*, which took in the territory as far as the Peneus, whilst the fourth was the *Macedonia Quarta*, which stretched to Illyricum and Epirus. Its capital was Pelagonia. So strict were these divisions that no one was allowed to marry or to purchase property except in his own tetrarchy, while it is said that the Macedonians compared this severance of their country to the "lacerating and disjoining of a living creature." A reference to these divisions appears in Acts 16¹².

This allocation of territory was, however, modified later, and in 146 B.C. Macedonia was granted the standing of a province, with Thessalonica as its capital. Augustus made it a senatorial province in 27 B.C., and Tiberius an Imperial province in A.D. 15. In the year 44, Claudius restored it to the senate. When, therefore, Paul visited it, it was governed by a proconsul of prætorian rank (see art. p. 30). Roughly speaking, the Province lay between the boundaries of Illyricum on the north, of Achaia on the south, while laterally it extended from the Adriatic to the Ægean Sea.

Three towns in Macedonia are prominent in the narrative of St. Luke: Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea.

Philippi was a place of considerable military importance since the days when Philip, the father of Alexander the Great, made it into a frontier town to protect Macedonia from Thrace. It was also rich from the working of the neighbouring gold-mines; but it enjoyed little

commerce, and, for that reason, did not attract any great Jewish population. Apparently there were not enough Jews there for the establishment of a synagogue (Acts 16¹³).

Thessalonica, on the other hand, contained, as it still does, a large Jewish community, and boasted of a number of important synagogues. The city had been founded by one of Alexander's generals, and had replaced the more ancient Therma. Little of the city, as Paul knew it, remains to-day, so often has it suffered fire, siege, and earthquake. The site of the synagogue in which he is believed to have preached is still marked by a monument, which was spared, though mutilated, in the great fire of 1917. Outside the town, on the south-east, are the remains of an ancient church built over a spring called St. Paul's Well, said to have been the resort of the Apostle. Lastly, there is a small eminence, just outside the walls on the opposite side, named St. Paul's Hill, which is believed to have been one of his preaching centres. Otherwise practically every standing relic, including the walls and the ancient aqueduct in Thessalonica, or Salonika as it is called to-day, is later than the Pauline period.

Berœa, the modern Verria, stands at the foot of the hills across the Vardar plain from Salonika. Judging from the geographical changes that are taking place, it is probable that Berœa once stood much nearer the sea than now. The present road and railway cross this plain; but it is by no means certain that such a crossing was possible in Paul's day unless by boat. At

best the route must have been intensely dangerous by reason of the quags.

Luke says that the people of Beroëa were "more noble than those in Thessalonica," and the statement still holds good. Salonika, variously known as the "Pearl of the Orient" and *La Ville convoitée*, has suffered from all the moral degradation which seems to characterize a seaport. Beroëa, on the other hand, stands away from any trade route, and the great *Via Egnatia*, which once connected Rome with Constantinople by way of Thessalonica, passed it by. The climate, too, of Beroëa is very different. Salonika is an arid, burnt-up spot, devoid of streams and woods; but Beroëa is well watered and vegetation is rich. In that favoured spot there is every inducement to encourage husbandry, and the agriculturist has ever been a finer type than the enervated town-dweller.

Outside the walls of Verria to-day are the remains of an ancient synagogue bearing a tablet in one of the walls with an inscription in Hebrew to the effect that Paul preached there.

ATHENS.

When one visits this historic city it is not difficult to imagine the surroundings amid which Paul found himself there, for the temples and monuments have been so wonderfully preserved that one can visualize the scenes upon which he must have looked. For nearly all these ancient buildings are together, a little quarter of the

city set apart and standing like a jewel in a casket, a priceless relic of the capital concerning which Aristophanes exclaimed :

“ O thou, our Athens, violet wreathed,
Brilliant, most enviable city.”

It is said that this eulogy was occasioned by the sight of the Parthenon, the great Temple crowning the Acropolis and containing the shrine of the goddess Minerva or Athena, the patron deity of the city. The statue of the goddess stood 38 feet high and was carved in ivory and gold. It was prized as the most sublime work of Phidias, the great Greek sculptor.

When Greece was free—during the period prior to 146 B.C.—Athens was the capital of Attica. It was then pre-eminent in the world in politics, art, literature, and commerce. But when the Greek supremacy gave place to the Roman, and the old Attica became Achaia, Athens fell from its proud position, though, in Paul's day, it was still celebrated for its university and its philosophers. But though outwardly Athens was splendid as before, inwardly it was decadent, and lived largely upon its great traditions.

“ The decay of Athens,” says James Strahan, “ was due less to the exhaustion of her creative energy, with the substitution of imitative for original work, than to the simple fact that the thought and act of her citizens were no longer wedded to noble action and brave endurance. Full of æsthetes and dilettantes, loving the reputation more than the reality of culture, letting a restless inquisitiveness and shallow scepticism take the

place of high aspiration and moral enthusiasm, she became blind to the visions, and deaf to the voices which redeem individual and collective life from vanity."

It was at Athens that the Apostle encountered the opposition of the Stoics and the Epicureans (Acts 17¹⁸). The former of these philosophical schools had then been in existence some 350 years; that is, from the time of Zeno, the founder of the school, which afterwards included the name of Seneca (a contemporary of Paul), Epictetus, and Marcus Aurelius. The word "Stoic" comes from the Greek "Stoa," meaning a porch, and the "Painted Porch" in which the Stoics taught was situated in the Athenian market-place, so that it was natural that some of the members of this fraternity should have been among the Apostle's listeners when he "reasoned . . . in the market-place every day with them that met with him" (Acts 17¹⁷). The garden where the Epicureans gathered for the discussions was also near by, so that they, too, formed part of his audience as they idly lingered to see what was going on.

The Epicurean philosophy dates from the time of Epicurus, who was born in 341 B.C.. His father was Neocles, an Athenian who had settled, it is thought, in the island of Samos, where he laboured as a schoolmaster, his son assisting him. The latter returned in the year 307 B.C. to Athens, where he purchased a house and garden. His house became famous as the home of a large band of men and women who became his devotees and friends.

These schools were diametrically opposed. The Epicurean system was "an endeavour to extract the maximum of tranquil gratification" from life by the prudent and unimpassioned use of it. They held aloof, therefore, from the popular political excitements of their day, and endeavoured to exemplify their principles by a cool indifference to their environment. Prudence was their watchword, and in their pursuit of pleasure the virtues of moderation were by no means ignored. It is a mistake, therefore, to associate this philosophy with sensuality. The chief endeavour was to deliver men from "the fear of the gods," and the essence of the system lay in materialism.

The leading maxim of the Stoics was "live according to nature," and nature was interpreted as a "world spirit" whose highest manifestation was reason. In a sense this philosophy would seem to verge on monotheism since the world spirit was declared to animate all things, and existed in man in the form of the soul. But the approximation was rather in language than in fact, and the theology of the Stoics was frankly pantheistic. "Their so-called god had no independent or personal existence."

In opposition to the Epicurean principle that pleasure was the object of life, the Stoics declared that virtue was the only good. But their ideal of virtue was a cold and hard one. They banned all public honours and favours; emotion was thought to be perverted reason; pity and compassion were eschewed as disturbing to calm reason. Goodness and vice in their

philosophy knew no gradation. A man was entirely vicious or entirely virtuous. The criterion of conduct was motive, and a right motive made an act virtuous, however ill the effect might be. Suicide was common among the Stoics, who argued that a man need live only as long as it was possible to do so with dignity and usefulness.

In the controversy between Paul and these two schools the charge was brought that he was a "setter forth of strange gods" because he preached Jesus and the Resurrection. In the Greek language the word "resurrection" is *anastasis*, and this euphonious name was at once understood to refer to a personality, a female consort to the god Jesus. Such an interpretation turned the Apostle's word into a grave offence, the very offence, indeed, that had proved fatal to Socrates, who was charged with "corrupting the young men and not recognizing the gods whom the city recognized, but other novel divinities." The Apostle was accordingly placed before the council of the Areopagus, which took cognizance of such cases (Acts 17¹⁹).

In ancient times this court had supreme authority in all civil and religious matters, with the power of inflicting the death sentence. It met on Mars' Hill, which was a precipitous eminence adjoining the Acropolis. Whether this was the meeting-place in the present case is open to question, for in later times the council held its court for the discussion of religious questions in the Stoa Basileios, reserving the seat on Mars' Hill for criminal cases. In this respect it is to

be noted that the Revised Version has substituted "Areopagus" in Acts 17²² for "Mars' Hill." Says Sir W. M. Ramsay, "The Athenians were, in many respects, flippant; but their flippancy was combined with an intense pride in the national dignity and the historic glory of the city, which would have revolted at such an insult as that this stranger should harangue them about his foreign deities on the spot where the Athenian elders had judged the god Ares and the hero Orestes."

In the Apostle's speech to the Areopagites he declares that he saw in Athens an altar with the inscription "TO AN UNKNOWN GOD" (Acts 17²³). Such altars were common throughout the Greek world, and the suggestion has been made that they owed their origin to a curious legend. A terrible pestilence, so it is said, visited Athens in the sixth century, a pestilence so severe that all the usual modes of propitiating the gods failed. In their despair the people called to their aid Epimenides, the Cretan prophet and poet, who drove a flock of black and white sheep to the Areopagus, permitting them to stray where they liked. Regarding their movements as auguries, he then advised the Athenians to erect altars wherever any of the animals lay down, and there to sacrifice them "to the fitting god." The device proved efficacious, the pestilence was stayed, and thereafter it was the pious custom to build nameless altars with the inscription "To Unknown Gods."

The following articles also bear upon this section :

Corinth, p. 250.

Nazirites, vol. i. p. 241.

ST. PAUL'S THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY.

(ACTS xviii. 23-xxi. 17.)

EPHESUS.

The city of Ephesus was the capital of the Province of Asia, and the leading town of Asia Minor. Much of its importance was due to its geographical position, for it was on the main line from Rome to the East, and many routes converged upon it. But, like Liverpool to-day, Ephesus retained its commercial position only by arduous dredging of the river estuary, and it is suggested in Acts 20¹⁶ that even in Paul's day the harbour there was best avoided.

Perhaps the commerce of Ephesus would of itself have been insufficient to maintain its high standing among the cities of the ancient world had there not also been the added attraction of the great Temple of Artemis, one of the "Seven Wonders." This magnificent building replaced the original temple, which had been burnt down by an Ephesian fanatic named Herostratus, who was determined to attain notoriety if he were denied fame. But the new Temple surpassed the old.

"It gleamed far off with a star-like radiance. Its peristyle consisted of one hundred and twenty pillars of the Ionic order hewn out of Parian marble. Its doors of carved cypress-wood were surmounted by transoms so vast and solid that the aid of miracles was invoked to account for their elevation. The staircase which led to

the roof was said to have been cut out of a single vine of Cyprus. Some of the pillars were carved with designs of exquisite beauty. Within were the masterpieces of Praxiteles and Phidias, and Scopas and Polycletus. Paintings by the greatest artists, of which one—the likeness of Alexander the Great by Apelles—had been bought for a sum said to be equal in value to £5000 of modern money, adorned the inner walls. The roof of the temple itself was of cedar wood, supported by columns of jasper on bases of Parian marble. On these pillars hung gifts of priceless value, the votive offerings of grateful superstition. At the end of it stood the great altar adorned by the bas-relief of Praxiteles, behind which fell the vast folds of a purple curtain. Behind this curtain was the dark and awful adytum in which stood the most sacred idol of classic heathendom ; and again, behind the adytum was the room which, inviolable under divine protection, was regarded as the wealthiest and securest bank in the ancient world.”¹

Two hundred and twenty years were expended in this architectural achievement, the enormous cost being defrayed by the whole of Asia Minor, with a devotion comparable to that at the making of the Tabernacle in the Wilderness. Even the women contributed jewels, as did the Hebrew women of old.

The chief treasure of the Temple was the image of the goddess Artemis, erroneously given in our English Bible as “Diana” (Acts 19^{24ff.}). The substance of the statue is not known, but from the legend that the

¹ F. W. Farrar, *The Life and Work of St. Paul*, p. 357.

image had fallen from heaven (Acts 19³⁵), it was probably a meteorite like the Kaaba at Mecca. The Ephesian idol, however, was carved, the form representing a bust studded with breasts, a symbol of fertility. Inscribed probably somewhere on the base of this statue were certain mystic formulæ known as "Ephesian Letters," which were copied in various ways and sold to the credulous as charms.

A lucrative sale also went on in miniature productions of the goddess and temple, in gold, silver, brass, and in terra-cotta (Acts 19²⁴), for which there was a big demand. Particularly was this so in the month of May, which was sacred to Artemis. Special festivals were then held in Ephesus. The city at this time was given up to splendour and revelry somewhat analogous to the great Catholic festivals in Rome. The whole world assembled to see the pageant of processions and sacrifices, while on the secular side the great theatre and stadium were densely crowded by the throngs of people who came to listen to the musical contests, watch the games, and be thrilled by the gladiatorial shows. It was at this time that there occurred the incidents recorded in Acts 19^{23ff.}

Of this once frequented city little remains to-day, and the squalid Mohammedan village which stands near to the ancient site represents the place where the Christian church was so strongly entrenched that the great Œcumenical Council which deposed Nestorius, the heretical Patriarch of Constantinople, was held there. The great Temple of Artemis has little left but its

foundations ; the immense amphitheatre and stadium stand desolate and ruined. The harbour of Ephesus is now a reedy pool, and no sound but the cry of the bittern is heard amid its pestilent and stagnant marshes.

ST. PAUL'S ARREST.

(ACTS xxi. 18-xxiii. 30.)

THE EGYPTIAN AND THE ASSASSINS.

“ And as Paul was about to be brought into the castle, he saith unto the chief captain, May I say something unto thee ? And he said, Dost thou know Greek ? Art thou not then the Egyptian, which before these days stirred up to sedition and led out into the wilderness the four thousand men of the Assassins ? ” (Acts 21^{37. 38}).

The key to this question is found in the following passage from Josephus :

“ There sprang up another sort of robbers in Jerusalem, which were called Sicarii, who slew men in the daytime, and in the midst of the city ; this they did chiefly at the festivals, when they mingled themselves among the multitude, and concealed daggers under their garments, with which they stabbed those that were their enemies ; and when any fell down dead, the murderers became a part of those that had indignation against them ; by which means they appeared persons of such reputation that they could by no means be discovered. The first man who was slain by them was

Jonathan the high priest, after whose death many were slain every day, while the fear men were in of being so served was more afflicting than the calamity itself ; and while everybody expected death every hour, as men do in war, so men were obliged to look before them, and to take notice of their enemies at a great distance ; nor, if their friends were coming to them, durst they trust them any longer ; but in the midst of their suspicions and guarding of themselves they were slain. Such was the celerity of the plotters against them and so cunning was their contrivance.

“ There was also another body of wicked men gotten together, not so impure in their actions, but more wicked in their intentions, who laid waste the happy state of the city no less than did these murderers. These were such men as deceived and deluded the people under pretence of divine inspiration, but were for procuring innovations and changes of the government ; and these prevailed with the multitude to act like madmen, and went before them into the wilderness, as pretending that God would there show them the signals of liberty ; but Felix thought this procedure was to be the beginning of a revolt ; so he sent some horsemen, and footmen, both armed, who destroyed a great number of them.

“ But there was an Egyptian false prophet that did the Jews more mischief than the former ; for he was a cheat, and pretended to be a prophet also ; and got together thirty thousand men that were deluded by him ; these he led round about from the wilderness to the mount which was called the Mount of Olives, and was ready to

break into Jerusalem by force from that place ; and if he could but once conquer the Roman garrison and the people, he intended to domineer over them by the assistance of those guards of his that were to break into the city with him, but Felix prevented his attempt, and met him with his Roman soldiers, while all the people assisted him in his attack upon them, insomuch that, when it came to a battle, the Egyptian ran away, with a few others, while the greatest part of these that were with him were either destroyed or taken alive ; but the rest of the multitude were dispersed every one to their own homes and there concealed themselves" (*Wars of the Jews*, ii. 13 ; iii. iv. v.).

ROMAN CITIZENSHIP.

In the early days of the Romans only the inhabitants of Rome could claim the privilege of being Roman citizens, but as the Empire grew this condition, technically known as *Civitas*, came to be an honour which could be awarded to both individuals and communities.

Both classes were graded.

1. *Civitates Libere*.—These were cities or communities which were granted permission to administer their own affairs without any interference by the provincial governor.

2. *Civitates Immunes*.—These were communities or cities exempted from the taxation which ordinary inhabitants of a province were liable to pay.

3. *Civitates Fœderatæ*.—All cities and communities

were comprehended under this title whose position in regard to Rome was defined by a special treaty.

An individual Roman citizen had the following rights and privileges :

1. The right of voting in popular assemblies.
2. The right of being eligible to all public offices, civil, military, or religious.
3. The right to appeal from the magistrates to the Cæsar when impeached of any crime involving life, personal freedom, or the permanent loss of political and social privileges (cf. Acts 25¹⁰).
4. The right of contracting a regular marriage.
5. The right of acquiring, transferring, and holding property of all kinds according to the Roman laws.

There were three ways of acquiring citizenship :

1. *By Birth*.—A child born of parents both of whom were citizens was a citizen himself.
2. *By Gift*.—Foreigners could be granted the *Civitas* for special services. As in the case of modern honours, it became possible to gain the *Civitas* by direct or indirect purchase.
3. *By Manumission*.—A freed slave could be admitted to the *Civitas* if the reasons for the manumission were considered satisfactory by a board appointed for the purpose of considering such cases.

As the city of Tarsus was not a Colonia, and had not received the Roman franchise as a community, it follows that the possession of the honour of *Civitas* by Paul (Acts 16³⁷ 22^{25ff.}) shows that his family was one of wealth and distinction.

THE SANHEDRIN.

The Sanhedrin was the Jewish Supreme Council and High Court of Justice in Jerusalem during the Greek and Roman periods. Its origin is not definitely known. The Rabbis stated that it owed its conception to Moses in obedience to the command in Num. 11^{16, 17}: "And the Lord said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them unto the tent of meeting, that they may stand there with thee . . . and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone."

The "Great Sanhedrin," accordingly, consisted of seventy members, with the addition of a President, who was presumably the High Priest. The representatives were drawn from aristocratic Jewish families generally with a Sadducean majority, though under the Herods the Pharisaic party increased. The qualifications for membership were ideally stated as follows: "Members must be wise, courageous, high-principled, and humble. They must also be of high stature, of pleasing appearance, and of advanced age." Pure Jewish descent was an inviolable condition. When a vacancy occurred, the members co-opted one "from the congregation" to fill the place, admission being effected by the laying on of hands.

The Sanhedrin usually met in the Temple in "The Hall of Hewn Stones" (see art. HEROD'S TEMPLE, p. 55).

The members sat in a semicircle, with the President facing them. Between them stood the clerks of the Court and, behind these, three rows of the "disciples of the learned men." Any day, except the Sabbath, could be used for a sitting, and the reference in Acts 23^{9,10} shows that the session could sometimes be a very excitable and turbulent one. The significant phrase, "there arose a great dissension," followed by "the chief captain fearing lest Paul should be torn in pieces by them," does not point to that dignity of behaviour which we usually associate with a Court of Justice.

The prisoner had always to be dressed in mourning, *i.e.* unshorn and with clothes rent. When any one had spoken once in favour of the accused he was not permitted to speak later against him, while a two-third majority was required for a condemnation. The sentence in such case was deferred till the following day in order that an injustice might not be done in a fit of anger. In the case of an acquittal, however, the decision might be announced upon the day of trial, and for this a simple majority sufficed.

The powers of the Sanhedrin were considerable, though they varied with the alternating fortunes of the Jews. In the Roman period it enjoyed a high position, for it was always the Roman policy to respect and, where possible, utilize local organizations for the maintenance of order. The kind of case that was commonly brought before its jurisdiction can be gathered from the New Testament records. "Thus Christ appeared before

it on a charge of blasphemy (Mt. 26⁵⁷, Jn. 19⁷); Peter and John were accused before it of being false prophets and deceivers of the people (Acts 4^{5ff.}); Stephen was condemned by it because of blasphemy (Acts 7^{57. 58}); and Paul was charged with transgression of the Mosaic Law (Acts 22³⁰). It had independent authority and right to arrest people by its own officers (Mt. 26⁴⁷, Mk. 14⁴³, Acts 4³ 5^{17. 18}); it had also the power of finally disposing, on its own authority, of such cases as did not involve sentence of death (Acts 4⁵⁻²³ 5²¹⁻⁴⁰). It was only in cases when the sentence of death was pronounced that the latter had to be ratified by the Roman authorities (Jn. 18³¹); the case of the stoning of Stephen must be regarded as an instance of mob-justice." (Oesterley.) It should be noted that in the case of one offence, that of profanation of the Temple, even Roman citizens might be tried and condemned by the Sanhedrin, subject always to the Procurator's revision of a capital sentence.

The following articles also bear upon this section :

Herod's Temple, vol. iii. p. 55.

Nazirites, vol. i. p. 240.

Tarsus, vol. iii. p. 169.

The Gentiles, vol. iii. p. 186.

The Pharisees, vol. iii. p. 43.

The Sadducees, vol. iii. p. 48.

The Scribes, vol. iii. p. 50.

Vows, vol. i. p. 239.

ST. PAUL'S IMPRISONMENT AT CÆSAREA.

(Acts xxiii. 31-xxvi. 32.)

CÆSAREA AND FELIX.

The town of Cæsarea, the capital of the Roman Province of Judæa and the seat of its Procurators, was originally a Greek fishing town known as Straton's Tower, but, as there was no harbour between Joppa and Dora, Herod the Great conceived the magnificent design of forming it into an artificial port. To effect his purpose, he threw out a semicircular mole enclosing a large tract of water. The port was then named Sebastus, the Greek for Augustus, in honour of the Emperor, while the city itself was called Cæsarea. Twelve years were spent in the work, which was completed in 10 B.C.

At the time of Paul's imprisonment Cæsarea was the scene of violent rioting and bloodshed. The population of the town consisted of Greeks and Jews, between whom there were constant quarrels. The Jews argued that, as the city had been built by Herod, they were entitled to privileges of citizenship which could be claimed by no other race. The Greeks replied by saying that, as Straton's Tower existed as a Syrian town before Cæsarea was built, if any question of precedence arose, it should be in their favour. Occasionally the magistrates made examples of the ringleaders in these squabbles by whipping and imprisonment, but nothing could extinguish the animosity until the climax was reached

in a terrible riot in the market-place. In this fight the Jews were winning when news was brought to Felix, the Procurator, of the disorder ; and, marching down with a strong force, he ordered the Jews to their homes. When they hesitated to obey, he fell upon them, killing many and permitting the soldiery to plunder their houses. This was the crowning act in a career of tyranny. Historians, in fact, are unanimous in their estimate of Felix. Tacitus says that he combined in his rule " the powers of a king with the disposition of a slave," and that " he deemed that he might perpetrate any ill deeds with impunity."

As a rule the Roman Procurators held office for a short time only. Felix, however, had remained for six years, and as his recall nearly coincided with the massacre of the Jews which has just been related, he, conscious of the illegality of his actions, endeavoured to placate them by leaving Paul in prison (Acts 24²⁷). This expedient, however, was a fruitless one, and when Felix sailed for Rome accompanied by his bosom friend, Simon Magus, the Jews at the same time sent a deputation to accuse him before the Emperor. The investigation proved very damaging to Felix, so that " he had certainly been brought to punishment, unless Nero had yielded to the importunate solicitations of his brother Pallas."

Drusilla was the " Third Queen " of Felix, and the youngest of the three daughters of Herod Agrippa I. Renowned for beauty, her career, like so many of the wealthy Roman ladies of that period, was that of a

courtesan. Josephus records that there was one son as the result of the illicit union between her and Felix, and that both she and this boy perished in the great eruption of Vesuvius, A.D. 79.

A ROMAN TRIAL.

A Roman Court of Justice in its architectural plan was usually a basilica, that is to say, a rectangular hall containing two rows of pillars with a central space and two aisles. At the end there was frequently an apse, and in front of this a raised dais on which the magistrate sat in a chair. Before him was an image of the god, at whose altar the witnesses were sworn. On either side were seats for the jurors, while in front of the tribune were placed the prosecutor, the prisoner, and the advocates of the two parties. The magistrate was attended by clerks, lictors, and other officials. The jurors were empanelled much in the same manner as in England to-day. A list was kept of those liable to serve and, at the time of trial, the names of those next on the rota were cast into an urn and then drawn. The prisoner had the right to object to any particular juror.

The Latin language was that usually employed in trials, though Greek was not prohibited. In the case of Paul's trial before Felix, the proceedings were probably conducted in Latin, and this would necessitate the employment by the Jews of the Roman advocate Tertullus (Acts 24¹), as they themselves would probably be unable to speak Latin with fluency.

When a prisoner was tried, the case for the prosecution was heard first, and the witness on that side called (Acts 24⁹), after which the usher called *Dixit*, "He has spoken." The defence was then called (Acts 24¹⁰), together with such witnesses as a prisoner could muster, after which the usher called *Dixeunt*, "They have spoken." The judge summed up the case, and the jurors voted by means of tablets on which they wrote the verdict—"C" (*Condemno*), if found guilty; "A" (*Absolvo*), if innocent; and "N.L." (*Non liquet*), "not proven," if the case was doubtful. The magistrate then pronounced judgment according to the decisions of the majority. A jury, however, was not always called, and probably Felix gave his decision without assistance.

FESTUS, AGRIPPA, AND BERENICE.

Of the new Procurator Festus, who succeeded Felix, very little is known. If the chronology is correct, he assumed office in the year A.D. 60, and the resumption of the trial of Paul was one of his first duties. Apparently this new trial was not conducted with perfect regularity, and with a view to finding a solution of the difficulty which the conflicting evidence occasioned, Festus suggested that the case might be referred to the Sanhedrin. But the Apostle's patience was exhausted, and, availing himself of the privilege of a Roman citizen (see art. p. 205), he pronounced the fateful words, *Cæsarem appello*.

This notice of appeal surprised Festus. It was a

serious matter for a prisoner to appeal to the Cæsar. It involved grave responsibilities ; in a sense it reflected upon the administration of the Procurator, and the expenses were considerable. Festus accordingly consulted with the *Consilarii*, a council of men who acted as advisers to the governor (Acts 25¹²), and the appeal was then legally ratified. The trial came to a sudden and dramatic end, and no further proceedings were necessary save to make out the official statement of the case in a report called *relatio*.

But here Festus was in a difficulty. He could not send Paul to the Emperor without a detailed specified charge ; and the accusations against the Apostle were so vague and his own knowledge of the Jews so slight that he was "perplexed" (Acts 25²⁰). Then a happy thought struck him. King Agrippa II. and his sister Berenice were in Cæsarea on a complimentary visit of congratulation to the new Procurator. Agrippa was "expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews" (Acts 26³), and he could give him the advice and information he needed.

Agrippa II. was the son of Agrippa I. At the time of his father's death (Acts 12²⁰⁻²³) he was seventeen years of age and resident in Rome. He did not at once inherit his father's kingdom, which was temporarily converted into a province ; but some few years afterwards he was given the tetrarchies of Philip and Lysanias. Then, in A.D. 56, Nero added to this grant the regions of Tiberias and Taricheæ. Berenice, his sister, was notorious for her illicit amours. She was a

celebrated beauty, and was married first to Marcus, whose father was Alabarch at Alexandria. At his death, when only twenty years of age, she went to live with Agrippa—as his incestuous mistress, it is said. As a refuge from the scandal which resulted she married Polemon, King of Cilicia; but she soon deserted him and returned to her brother. This was shortly before the visit to Festus. Afterwards she was mistress both of Vespasian and his son Titus.

The exclamation of Agrippa in Acts 26²⁸, “With but little persuasion thou wouldest fain make me a Christian,” is another example of the dilettante interest the clever Herod family took in this new religion. It will be recalled that one Herod had listened gladly to the Baptist (Mk. 6²⁰), and that another had been anxious to see Jesus (Lk. 23⁸).

Festus and Agrippa are associated together once more in history in an interesting incident recorded by Josephus: “About the same time King Agrippa built himself a very large dining-room in the royal palace at Jerusalem, near to the portico. Now this palace had been erected of old by the children of Asamoneus, and was situate upon an elevation, and afforded a most delightful prospect to those that had a mind to take a view of the city, which prospect was desired by the king; and there he could lie down, and eat, and thence observe what was done in the temple; which thing, when the chief men of Jerusalem saw, they were very much displeased at it; for it was not agreeable to the institutions of our country or law that what was done in the

temple should be viewed by others, especially what belonged to the sacrifices. They therefore erected a wall upon the uppermost building which belonged to the inner court of the temple towards the West ; which wall, when it was built, did not only intercept the prospect of the dining-room in the palace, but also of the western cloisters that belonged to the outer court of the temple also, where it was that the Romans kept guards for the temple at the festivals. At these doings both King Agrippa, and principally Festus the procurator, were much displeased ; and Festus ordered them to pull the wall down again ; but the Jews petitioned him to give them leave to send an embassy about this matter to Nero ; for they said they could not endure to live if any part of the temple should be demolished ; and when Festus had given them leave to do so, they sent ten of their principal men to Nero, as also Ismael the high priest, and Helcias, the keeper of the sacred treasure. And when Nero had heard what they had to say, he not only forgave them what they had already done, but also gave them leave to let the wall they had built stand. This was granted them in order to gratify Poppea, Nero's wife" (*Antiquities of the Jews*, xx. 8, 11).

THE VOYAGE TO PUTEOLI.

(ACTS XXVII. 1-XXVIII. 13.)

AN ALEXANDRIAN CORN-SHIP.

Lucian, the Greek traveller and satirist, who lived just after the Apostolic age, has left to us a description of such an Alexandrian corn-ship as that in which St. Paul voyaged. It was called the *Isis*, and his account of it is written in conversational form as follows :

“But what a ship it was ! The carpenter said it was 180 feet long and 45 wide, and from the deck down to the pump at the bottom of the hold 45½ ! And for the rest, what a mast it was ! and what a yard it carried ! and with what a cable was it sustained ! and how gracefully the stern was rounded off, and was surmounted with a golden goose (the sign of a corn-ship) ! and at the other end how gallantly the prow sprang forward, carrying on either side the goddess after whom the ship was named ! and all the rest of the ornament, the painting, and the flaming pennants, and above all the anchors, and the capstans, and windlasses, and the cabin next the stern, all appeared to me perfectly marvellous. And the multitude of sailors one might compare to a little army, and it was said to carry corn enough to suffice for a year’s consumption for all Attica, and this unwieldy bulk was all managed by that little shrivelled old gentleman with a bald pate, who sat at the helm twisting about with a bit of a handle those

two monstrous paddles, one on each side, which serve as rudders."

The rudders were not like those in modern craft, but resembled long oars which projected one from each side of the stern. This steering gear was managed by the "governor," i.e. twelve sweeps which were joined by a cross bar so that they moved together. As a rule there was a single mast carrying a big yard, from which hung the one large sail. The strain on the hull in the hoisting of this heavy sail was very great, and to meet the danger of a fatal starting of the timbers undergirders were used, a coarse network of very strong ropes which were slipped under and bound round the hull of the vessel (Acts 27¹⁷). The deck in rough weather was protected from the waves by wicker-work screens fastened to the bulwarks. Tied to the stern was the ship's boat, which trailed behind in the way the Greek and Balkan sailors still adopt. At the stern of the vessel there was often an image of the god to whose care the vessel was committed. Sometimes there were two figures, in which case the other was at the bow. Such a vessel would be the *Castor and Pollux* (Acts 28¹¹), named after the two guardian deities of mariners.

The size of these merchant ships appears to have been anything from 500 to 1000 tons, and their average speed with a favourable wind about 7 miles an hour. The Alexandrian corn-fleet had the finest vessels, for the desire to get to Italy in the shortest possible time was as powerful in those days as that of winning the great ocean race with the first cargo of tea in the Victorian

period, or the competition between our modern American liners. Nor was the eagerness of the Roman populace less keen than that of the sailors, for the problem of feeding the great Italian population was often very acute in the days of Rome's greatness, and the punctual arrival of a corn-ship might spell the difference between famine and plenty.

Sea voyages were limited to the spring, the summer, and the early autumn (cf. Acts 27¹²). In the late autumn ships either returned home or harboured abroad. Sailings were officially resumed on 5th March, when the feast of "The Ship of Isis" was celebrated all along the coast of the Mediterranean.

Voyages were made preferably on clear nights so that the course could be directed by the stars, to which the passengers made worship before starting. Coast dwellers were addicted to the crime of wrecking—many false beacons being set up along the more dangerous shores in order to lure ships to their doom—and then profit either by the wreckage or by the sale of passengers and crew as slaves. Pirates were also common, though these pests had been fairly well cleared out of the Mediterranean in New Testament days.

MELITA.

The Island of Melita, the modern Malta, though now densely populated, was in Roman days sparsely inhabited. At the time of Paul's shipwreck it had been in Roman hands for over two hundred years, but its development

had been neglected since the conquerors wrested it from the Carthaginians. Indeed until Pompey had swept the Mediterranean free from pirates, these gentry had used Melita not only as a convenient port of call, but as a place to winter in.

Prior to the Carthaginian occupation, Melita had been held by the Greeks, and enjoyed some considerable prosperity. This prosperity had begun to return at the time of Acts, and the population had become known for their fine stuffs woven from cotton grown on the island.

Malta is only 17 miles long and 9 to 10 broad, so that it could not offer any great industrial or agricultural opportunities. Its wind-swept position, too, has kept its hilly contours bare of trees, and the limestone rock of which it is composed comes very near the surface. But the humidity of the island is great, so that a thin soil vegetation is richly fertile.

The capital of Melita was then called Medina, and stood in the centre of the island and not at Valetta. The people of the island are called "barbarous" (A.V.) and "barbarians" (R.V.), but these terms are misleading. The Greek word used by the author of Acts means "foreign folk," that is, non-Greek people. The Maltese were of Phœnician descent, and are described by contemporary historians as highly civilized.

PUTEOLI TO ROME.

(ACTS xxviii. 14-31.)

THE APPIAN WAY.

The journey from Puteoli to Rome was made for the most part on the Appian Way, one of the Roman roads built by Appius Claudius Cæcus, who was censor in 312 B.C.

Puteoli has been described as the "Liverpool of Italy." It was the great port for Rome, the place where the Imperial corn-fleet was accustomed to unload its cargoes of Egyptian wheat. The road which connected it with the capital was therefore one of the most important in the Empire. Its pavement was sufficiently wide to allow two chariots to drive side by side, and it consisted of massive blocks of basaltic lava upon a foundation of concrete. Milestones marked the distances along its course, and every 20 miles or so was a posting station for the convenience of travellers. On either side of the road, at distances of about 40 feet apart, were low columns used as seats for the weary, and to assist in mounting on horseback. The road was also provided with inns, and was adorned with statues.

The Appian Way lay through Cumæ and Liternum to Sinuessa, some 33 miles from Puteoli, and at this point the Apostle with his escort would join it, following its route to Terracina, a distance of 47 miles. From Terracina two ways were available—a circuitous road round the Pontine marshes, or a canal

passage cut through the morass in a direct line, the barges being drawn by mules. It is not known which of these two routes was taken, and doubtless, because of the uncertainty, the friends of Paul chose to meet him at Appii Forum, where the two ways met (Acts 28¹⁵). This small town was 43 miles from Rome. From there the united company advanced along the Appian Way to the Three Taverns, a well-known posting station, where another party of friends was waiting. And so, thanking God and taking courage, the Apostle was escorted to the Imperial City, passing through suburbs with splendid villas, and through the arch of Drusus, which still stands. Finally they entered Rome by the Capuan gate, from which the milestones along the Via Appia were measured.

“Thus did St. Paul, after years of waiting, arrive at Rome, a prisoner indeed, and in chains, yet accompanied by so large a company of friends that his entrance seemed more like the triumphal procession of a conqueror, than the delivery of a prisoner about to be tried for his life.”

ST. PAUL'S LETTERS.¹

1 THESSALONIANS.

LETTERS AND LETTER-WRITING IN NEW TESTAMENT DAYS.

THE Epistles of St. Paul naturally invite us to discuss the subject of letter-writing in the time of the Apostle. It is true that only one letter from the Apostle's private correspondence—the Epistle to Philemon—has come down to us; but his other writings bear a marked resemblance to the ordinary letters of the time. Such a comparison has been made possible by the discovery in Egypt within recent years of numerous private letters of all kinds, and we are now able to form a clear idea of the appearance and structure of the Pauline letters.

To begin, then, with their outward appearance. There is little doubt that, like other writers of his day, Paul wrote his letters on papyrus sheets. The papyrus plant, which gave its name to the writing material of antiquity, grew at one time in great profusion in the Nile river, and is found at the present day in the Sudan, in Palestine by the waters of Lake Huleh and the Lake of Tiberias, in Sicily and on the shores of Lake Trasimeno

¹ These are placed in chronological order.

in Italy. Wiedemann gives this description of the plant: "A marsh plant, growing in shallow water; root creeping, nearly as thick as a man's arm, with numerous root-fibres running downwards; several smooth, straight, triangular stalks 10 to 18 feet high containing a moist pith, and surmounted by an involucre with brush-like plumes." To prepare the "paper" the stem of the plant was first cut into long thin strips. These strips were laid side by side on a flat surface and soaked with Nile water. Another layer of strips was laid horizontally on the top of the first, and the whole glued together and pressed down to form a single sheet. The sheet was then dried in the sun and made smooth by polishing, and in its final form had a texture similar to our brown paper.

Taking the ordinary papyrus letter as a specimen, we may infer that Paul wrote on a sheet whose size was from 9 to 11 inches in length, and from 5 to 5½ inches in breadth. A short letter, like the Epistle to Philemon, would occupy probably not more than one or two of these sheets. When more space was required the sheets were joined together at the ends to form a roll. It was customary to write on one side of the paper only, the side on which the fibres ran horizontally, known as the *recto*. The back, or the *verso*, less smooth than the other, was reserved for the address. But if lack of material demanded it, the writer might make shift to use the *verso* also.

"It is tempting," says Professor Milligan, "to find in this practice an explanation of the reference in

Rev. 5¹ to the book of woes as 'written within and on the back.' So numerous, that is, were these woes that one side of the papyrus roll could not contain them, and they had to be carried over to the other. But, while this is a fair interpretation of the words, it is right to notice that the word rendered 'on the back' may refer not to what precedes, but to what follows. If so, the document was not a roll at all, but in the form of a codex or book, each leaf being placed on the top of the other, and, because it was sealed 'on the back' or 'on the outside,' its contents could not be known until the seals were loosed."

The writing itself was arranged in two parallel columns placed close together, from 2 to 3 inches in width. The pen was cut from a rush or reed and prepared in the manner of a quill, while the ink was a mixture of charcoal, gum, and water. The excellent quality of the ink is seen in the fact that it has preserved its colour so remarkably, but by not sinking into the paper as does the ink of to-day it was readily washed off. This has an interesting bearing on Col. 2¹⁴, where we read that the Lord "blotted out the bond written in ordinances that was against us." The verb used for "blotting out" means strictly "washing out," and is the technical term for the washing out of writing from papyrus.

The letter when finished was rolled up and held together with a string, and the address, consisting of as few words as possible, *e.g.* "To Romans," "To Galatians," was written on the back of the roll. No more was necessary, for the letter would be carried to

its destination by a friend or acquaintance or by one of the special Christian messengers. But the very brevity of the address has given rise to difficulties. For example, it has left us in doubt whether the Epistle to the Galatians was intended for the inhabitants of Northern Galatia or the inhabitants of Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe, in Southern Galatia.

Paul did not write his letters with his own hand, but dictated them to an amanuensis; and in so doing he followed the customary practice of the time, a practice which still holds in the East, where the public scribe, seated at his table with ink and pen in readiness, is a familiar figure of the street. Paul's amanuensis, however, is to be thought of not as a professional scribe, but rather as some educated friend or acquaintance. "We can easily understand," says Professor Milligan, "what a relief it would be to him in the midst of his daily toil and pressure to get the assistance of a disciple or friend in the actual work of writing. And that he did make use of such aid is borne out by the evidence of some of the letters themselves. Tertius's postscript in Rom. 16²², 'I Tertius, who write the letter, salute you in the Lord,' can hardly be understood otherwise than that his hand had actually penned the Apostolic message. And the manner of Paul's reference to his authenticating signature in 2 Thess. 3^{17, 18}, 'The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every letter: so I write. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all,' is such as to imply that the body of the letter

had been written by some one else" (cf. 1 Cor. 16^{21ff.}, Col. 4¹⁸).

With regard to the general structure of the Pauline letters, this again bears a close resemblance to the form of the ordinary Greek letter. That form begins with a greeting. This is followed by a prayer and thanksgiving. Then comes the main body of the letter, and the whole closes with salutations and valediction. We shall quote one example. It is a letter written by a young soldier to his father, and belongs to the second century A.D.

"Apion to Epimachus his father and lord, heartiest greetings. First of all I pray that you are in health and continually prosper and fare well with my sister and her daughter and my brother. I thank the lord Serapis that when I was in danger at sea he saved me. Straightway when I entered Misenum I received my travelling money from Cæsar, three gold pieces. And I am well. I beg you, therefore, my lord father, write me a few lines, first regarding your health, secondly regarding that of my brother and sister, thirdly that I may kiss your hand, because you have brought me up well, and on this account I hope to be quickly promoted, if the gods will. Give many greetings to Capito, and to my brother and sister, and to Serenilla, and my friends. I send you a little portrait of myself at the hands of Euctemon. And my (military) name is Antonius Maximus. I pray for your good health."

The address on the back runs :

"To Philadelphia for Epimachus from Apion his son."

There was no general postal service at this time. There was certainly an Imperial postal system, but its use was confined to official correspondence. Travelling, however, although not rapid, was easy and safe, and the facilities offered by the journeys of friends and acquaintances, or by those of the special messengers of the great trading companies, were largely used for the conveyance of letters in New Testament times. The letters of the Apostle must, by their nature, have been committed to the care and safe delivery of friends and Christian messengers who would be able also to supplement their contents with a verbal message.

THE CHURCH AT THESSALONICA.

At the time of Paul, Thessalonica was the chief city of Macedonia, wealthy and populous and an important seaport, as, indeed, it has always remained. It lay at the head of the Thermaic Gulf (now the Gulf of Salonika), with its houses and streets rising from the blue waters of the Ægean and covering the steep hillside up to the walls of fortification. Across the bay stood snow-capped Mt. Olympus, the fabled home of the gods. Through the heart of the city, from east to west, ran the Via Egnatia, the great military road linking Rome to her eastern provinces. Thessalonica was a "free city," possessing its own constitution, which was democratic in form. Its chief magistrates were called Politarchs, that is to say, City-rulers.

It was during his Second Missionary Journey that

Paul first visited Thessalonica and founded the Christian Church there. Forced to leave Philippi, the Apostle, along with Silas and Timothy, set out to cover the hundred miles that separated them from Thessalonica, passing Amphipolis and Apollonia on the way—a road set amid scenery of great natural beauty and remarkably well wooded still for the first 60 miles, but becoming somewhat bare and desolate as the plain in which Apollonia stood is entered. Skirting the south side of the lakes, the road leads up to the heights, guarding the city on the east, from which the first view of distant Olympus and the sea is to be had.

Arrived at Thessalonica, the Apostles found a lodging-place in the house of a Jew of property called Jason, and in a busy manufacturing town, like his native Tarsus, Paul was able to find employment at his own trade of tent-making, working “both night and day” so as to be chargeable to none (1 Thess. 2⁹, 2 Thess. 3⁸). Following his usual custom, the Apostle addressed himself first to his own people, preaching in the Jewish synagogue on three successive Sabbaths. So far as the Jews were concerned, the ministry in Thessalonica met with small response, but Luke mentions two other classes of converts: “of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few.”

The Church founded at Thessalonica was composed mainly of converted pagans. “Ye turned unto God from idols,” says the Apostle, “to serve a living and true God” (1 Thess. 1⁹). And the vices also against which he warns his readers, as Professor Adeney points

out, "were more Greek and pagan than Jewish, such as immoral relations between men and women (1 Thess. 4¹⁻⁸), drunkenness (5⁷), indolence (2 Thess. 3¹⁰), mischievous gossiping (5¹¹). The licentiousness of the peoples of Hellenic civilization was notorious, while the faults of the Jews lay rather in the direction of bigotry, pride, censoriousness, and greed of money."

It was also what we might call a working-class Church. "Not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble" were to be found among its members. No doubt there was a certain number of well-to-do Jewish converts, and there is, of course, the reference to the "chief women." Nevertheless the Church was in the main made up of working people, to whom Paul's counsel is that they study to be quiet, and to do their own business, and to work with their hands (1 Thess. 4¹¹). It was among these simple folk that the Apostle found his most devoted followers. Writing to them from Corinth, he calls them his "glory and joy," and compares his relation with them to that of a father with his own children. He comforts them in the bitter persecution which they are enduring. Persecution was the lot of all the Churches founded by the Apostle, but it was specially the lot of this Gentile Church in Thessalonica. And it is this thought that leads Paul to speak of the Day of the Lord and the appearing of Christ as an encouragement to hope and patience. In the Second Epistle, however, he has to warn his converts against dwelling too much on the expected Advent and neglecting their daily work and

duties. Many things must happen first, signs in heaven and earth, and in the meantime they must prepare themselves against that day by sobriety and watchfulness and a diligent attention to their duties.

The names of certain members of the Church at Thessalonica are known to us. The most notable, by his close connection with Paul, is Aristarchus, who accompanied him from Troas to Jerusalem and thence to Rome; others are Jason, Secundus, Gaius, and perhaps Demas. The persecution of the Church continued, but only seemed to consolidate it. And for several centuries the city was the bulwark of Eastern Christendom, winning for itself the title of "the Orthodox City."

TENT-MAKING.

"It is thought by some," says Dean Furneaux, "that Paul's trade was that of a weaver of the goat's-hair cloth, working for a master who supplied the loom. But the word 'tentmaker' suggests rather one who made up the material, cutting out and stretching the tents. His craft was strangely suited to his circumstances, since it required few tools, was capable of being followed anywhere, and left mind and tongue free. But it was, as a consequence, poorly paid, and he had to 'labour night and day' (1 Thess. 2⁹) in order not to burden his converts. Probably most of his evangelistic work was done, not by public preaching, but by personal contact, forming acquaintances as opportunity offered, labouring among those of his own

trade, gradually gathering about himself a little circle which became the nucleus of a Church. 'Is not this the Carpenter?' men had asked of the world's Saviour: and of the world's greatest missionary they might have asked similarly, 'Is not this the tentmaker?' "

Weaving and tent-making were common in Tarsus, and the strong cloth made from the hair of the goats that fed among the Cilician uplands was known far and wide. Tents were in constant demand and were used by shepherds and travellers, and also by the Roman soldiers.

Here and there in the Apostle's letters we can trace evident allusions to his work. It is Paul the craftsman, the "tentmaker," who writes to the Corinthians and warns them against schisms, rents, in the community; "that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (1 Cor. 1¹⁰; cf. 11¹⁸ 12²⁵). And later, he compares this earthly body to a frail tent-dwelling soon to be taken down and to be replaced by a house Divinely built, eternal in the heavens (2 Cor. 5¹⁻⁴).

NOTE.

- 1 Thess. 5²⁸ "*Salute all the brethren with an holy kiss.*"—The common Oriental salutation among kinsfolk and friends is the kiss on cheek or forehead, and is exchanged between men as well as between women. In the early Christian Church the "holy kiss," as Paul calls it, or the "kiss of love," as it is in the First Epistle of Peter, was an important feature of their assemblies, and the custom is still observed in the Greek and Oriental Churches, especially at Holy Communion. Canon Venables points out that,

“in the frequent allusions to the kiss of peace which occur in the early Christian worship, there is no reference to any restriction, while the cautions and admonitions we meet with as to its profanation and abuse plainly indicate the indiscriminate character of the salutation.” There can be little doubt that in the Apostolic Age the kiss was given promiscuously, without distinction of sex, but in later times the men kissed the men, and the women kissed the women.

The following articles also bear upon 1 Thessalonians :

Macedonia, p. 191.

The Day of the Lord, p. 233.

5¹⁹. 20 Religious Ecstasy, p. 267.

2 THESSALONIANS.

THE DAY OF THE LORD.

The origin and development of the Messianic Hope have already been discussed in the article which bears that title (p. 1). When we come to the Apostolic Age we find that the one subject of absorbing interest among both Jews and Christians is still the appearance of the Messiah, with this important difference, however, that, while the Jews are looking for His first appearance, the Church is eagerly awaiting His return, the Second Coming of the Lord.

There is no doubt that Paul, in common with the Early Church, believed that the Day of the Lord was near, that it would come in his own lifetime ; and although, as the years passed, he grew less confident, he still hoped that it might be so. But there were

certain events which must come first and herald its approach. What these events would be Paul makes clear in his second letter to the Thessalonians, written to calm the excitement and fanaticism which had arisen among them at the expected Advent of Christ. There must first be a great apostasy, a falling away from the faith, and also the revelation of the "Man of Lawlessness"—that is, Antichrist—before the coming of the Lord. This mystery of iniquity is already at work, but there is a power restraining it. That restraining power is the Roman Empire, with its genius for law and order, whose protection Paul had himself experienced at Thessalonica. When its influence is removed the forces of evil will be let loose and, under the leadership of Antichrist, will muster for the final assault.

It is recognized that Paul is here expressing ideas that were part of the popular religion of the day, and had their source in the Book of Daniel and the Apocalyptic writings which followed that work. "The 'distress of nations,' predicted by Christ Himself as overshadowing all mankind before He returned, had its counterpart in similar expectations of the Jews, in connection with their Messiah's coming. The 'abomination of desolation' in the Book of Daniel was quoted by Christ and also by the Jews, with similar meaning. Paul only repeated the Jewish belief when he spoke of the 'man of sin,' in the words of Daniel, as exalting himself above every god, and blaspheming the God of gods, the God of his fathers, and polluting the sanctuary, and setting up in it 'the abomination.' The Rabbis

also taught, like him, that this awful Antichrist would be slain by the Messiah at His coming. . . . Paul thus only repeated to the Thessalonians the universal belief of his race, in his disclosures respecting Antichrist; and Peter, in his speech at Pentecost, showed that the anticipation of terrible troubles, symbolized by the blood, and fire, and vapour, of smoke, of burning cities, and the slaughter of vast hosts; the sun itself being turned into darkness and the moon into blood, before the coming of the day of the Lord, was shared by him, also, and of course by the Apostles at large" (Geikie).

There was always present in the background of early Christian thought a vague and terrible figure, Satanic in power and character, the arch-enemy of Christ and His people, who would make war against Him and be finally overthrown. The origin of this belief is not easy to discover, but it seems probable that various elements are combined in it. The earliest of these is the ancient Babylonian myth of the dragon (Tiamat), who in the beginning contended with the creator (Marduk) and was vanquished, but who at the end is to revolt again and be utterly destroyed. Traces of this dragon-myth appear in the Old Testament, as in the story of the Temptation (Gen. 3) and in Daniel's description of Antiochus; in later Apocalyptic writings, and in the Book of Revelation (cf. Rev. 12^{3ff.}). Other supernatural features of Antichrist may be traced to the Zoroastrian "Satan," who figures under the name of Beliar or Belial in Jewish apocalyptic (cf. 2 Cor. 6¹⁵). Ezekiel's prophecy of the invasion of Gog and a great

and final attack on Israel by the nations (Ezek. 38), and the apocalyptic denunciations of other oppressors of the people may have furnished additional features to the picture. The writer of the Book of Revelation, living at a time when the Roman authorities had become hostile to Christianity, sees in the Emperor, or in Nero *redivivus*, the Antichrist whose coming is to be the sign of the end.

The actual events of Christ's Parousia, or appearance, are given in the New Testament as follows: "The descent of Jesus with His angels from the upper heavens to the lower; the sounding of the trumpet and the voice of the archangel which will summon the dead from Sheol; the giving to the saints of the body of the resurrection; the catching up of the living saints, who have been changed in the twinkling of an eye, to meet Jesus and the risen saints in the air; the general judgment of both living and dead; the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom, which, after a period of struggle, is to be victorious over the kingdom of Satan; and finally the fixing of the eternal supremacy of God."¹

GALATIANS.

GALATIA.

What did St. Paul mean by Galatia? If he meant the district towards the north of Asia Minor, which had been settled by the Gauls in the third century B.C.,

¹ Shailer Mathews, "Parousia," Hastings' *DB* (one vol.).

then the Galatians belonged to such cities as Ancyra, Tavium, and Pessinus in the north. This is the traditional view—the “North Galatian theory.” If, on the other hand, he meant the Roman province of Galatia, which included the old Gallic kingdom, but also extended farther south into parts of Phrygia, Lycaonia, and Pisidia, then the Galatians were the Churches of Antioch in Pisidia, Iconium, Derbe, and Lystra. This is the more recent view and what is known as the “South Galatian theory.”

Until within recent years it was generally held that the Epistle was written to North Galatia, but the South Galatian theory has been strongly advocated by Sir W. M. Ramsay, and is now accepted by a large number of scholars, though not yet universally. There are difficulties in both theories, but the South Galatian is the more probable and fits in better with the Book of Acts and the Pauline Epistles.

The scene of Paul's labours for more than two years is a land of very varied scenery and climate. The great tableland of Lycaonia holds the centre, a vast treeless, monotonous plain, strewn with salt lakes and marshes. Between it and the coast stretches the high range of the Taurus, “in huge summits, many covered with snow till late in spring; their rough sides clothed with forests; streams and rivers rushing down through the wildest confusion of gorge and glen and precipice; while the labyrinth of Alp above and beyond Alp is threaded only by rude tracks, unpracticable except to native horses, hereditarily sure footed and enduring.”

(Geikie.) Its highest peaks are contained in Pisidia, a wild and impassable country, the home of brigandage, and swept by mountain torrents dangerous to ford. It was probably in Pisidia that Paul experienced the "perils of rivers and perils of robbers" of which he writes in 2 Cor. 11²⁶. Phrygia is a high plateau traversed by the great trade route joining the Ægean with Syria and the Euphrates. "The scenery as a rule is monotonous and subdued; even the mountains of Phrygia seem not to have the spirit of freedom about them." North Galatia, the home of the Gauls, "consists of a vast series of bare, bleak uplands and sloping hillsides. It is almost devoid of trees, and the want of shade makes the heat of summer more trying, while the climate in winter is severe."

The population of the country was a very mixed one. The Lycaonians in the district of Derbe, Lystra, and farther east, probably represented the aboriginal inhabitants, or if not that, the earliest invaders. Their name is not mentioned in the New Testament, but there is a reference to their language in Acts 14¹¹, and no doubt "Lycaonian" was spoken in the villages and smaller towns. The Phrygians came from Thrace by way of the Hellespont, and settled in Asia Minor about the beginning of the first millennium B.C. Originally a fierce and warlike people, famous in prehistoric times, they degenerated rapidly, and the name "Phrygian" became a term of contempt and almost equivalent to "slave." For the Apostle to have addressed the inhabitants of South Galatia as "Phrygians" would

have been considered an insult. About 278 B.C. a new invasion began. Celtic tribes, the Gauls, who had been ravaging southern Europe, crossed over into Asia Minor, and for close on fifty years roamed and plundered at will, until at length they were defeated by Attalus I., who confined them to the north-eastern part of Phrygia, which was henceforth known as Galatia. In 189 B.C. they were conquered by the Romans and were placed under the protection of Rome, retaining, however, their independence. But in 25 B.C. the Romans formed Galatia into a province of the Empire.

The religion of the Phrygians was the one feature of their national character that influenced the Greeks and the surrounding peoples. Their two chief deities were Cybele, the Mother, the personification of the reproductive powers of Nature, and Attis, the Son, the life of Nature, dying in the winter and reviving with the spring. Attis, like Adonis, was represented as being slain, and his worshippers joined in his sufferings, mourning over his death and inflicting self-mutilations. In the spring he came to life again by the power of Cybele, and, therefore, the spring festivals were occasions of rejoicing, expressed in wild dances and Bacchanalian wanderings into the forests to the music of flute and cymbal and tambourine. The whole worship was a saturnalia of superstitions and obscene practices, carried out amid scenes of frenzied excitement and tumult. The wild, enthusiastic character of the old Phrygian religion did not disappear altogether when the country became Christian. Paul's warnings against

“drunkenness and revellings” (Gal. 5²¹) and “the works of the flesh” show that sensuality was the great danger of the converts. The ecstatic features of Cybele worship were reproduced to some extent in the Montanism of the second century.

It is probable that in the Apostle's time Roman influences were paramount in North Galatia. The cities in the south, however, were thoroughly Greek. “They had been part of the Macedonian kingdom, and were immersed in the ideas and habits of the Greeks before they had come under the Roman authority.” It is these cities with their mixed population of Lycaonians, Phrygians, Greeks, Gauls, Jewish traders, and Roman officials with which we are immediately concerned.

Antioch.

Antioch of Pisidia, as the city is called to distinguish it from the various Antiochs scattered over Asia Minor, was founded about 300 B.C. by Seleucus Nicator. It was really a Phrygian city, situated near the frontier of Phrygia and Pisidia. The Emperor Augustus had established a *colonia* there to keep the marauding tribes of the mountains in check, but the bulk of the population was Phrygian. The city was located at an elevation of about 3600 feet, and it has been suggested that Paul turned his steps to these bracing heights in order to get rid of the effects of his malaria. There was a large Jewish colony at Antioch, and a synagogue, in which Paul's first recorded sermon was preached. In

Acts 13⁵⁰ we read that "the Jews urged on the devout women of honourable estate, and the chief men of the city" to persecute Paul and Barnabas. In Phrygia, and indeed throughout Asia Minor, women of social standing had great influence.

Iconium.

This city, now called *Konieh*, was of special importance from its situation on the great road between Cilicia and the West. It was a busy commercial place, lying in a well-watered district which produced excellent crops.

It was at Iconium that Paul came into touch with Thecla. The story is contained in the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*, a second-century document, and is as follows: Thecla belonged to one of the chief families in Iconium, and was attracted to Paul by his preaching, which she accidentally overheard from a window in her mother's house. She made up her mind to remain unmarried. She was, however, engaged to an aristocratic youth named Thamyris, and he, with his mother's help, caused both the Apostle and Thecla to be brought before the magistrates. Paul was scourged and sent away from the city, and Thecla condemned to death. She was miraculously delivered, and journeyed after Paul to Antioch. There she offended the High Priest, Alexander, and at his instigation she was condemned by the Roman governor to be exposed to the wild beasts in the amphitheatre. But, being miraculously pre-

served from them, her life was saved through the influence of Queen Tryphæna, whose sympathy she had won. After many other troubles, Thecla joined Paul again, and finally retired to Seleucia, where she led the life of a nun until her death at the age of ninety.

Although the story has many of the characteristics of the apocryphal literature, it is held to have a certain basis of truth. We may believe that Thecla was a real person, who was converted by Paul, and that her devotion to the Apostle brought her into conflict with the authorities both in Iconium and in Antioch.

The same document contains a description of *Paul's personal appearance*, in which he is represented as of moderate height, with scanty hair, bow-legged, with large eyes, meeting eyebrows, and a hooked nose. His expression was "full of grace and pity; now he looked like a man, now he had the face of an angel." John of Antioch, writing in the sixth century, has preserved the tradition that Paul "was in person round-shouldered, with a sprinkling of grey on his head and beard, with an aquiline nose, greyish eyes, and meeting eyebrows."

Lystra.

"Though merely a small rustic town in the Lycaonian territory of southern Asia Minor, Lystra had been raised some fifty years before to the dignity of a Roman 'colony' by the Emperor Augustus, *i.e.* it had received a garrison of Roman veterans, with the view of holding

in check the wild tribes of the Isaurian mountains in its neighbourhood. These Romans would be few in number, and would keep very much to themselves ; though they were found in several of the towns which St. Paul visited, Philippi is the only one where they have left any trace in the narrative ; and there they did so owing to peculiar circumstances. The commerce and civic life of such a town would be carried on mainly by the educated Jews and Greeks ; by the latter term is meant not only Greeks by race, but also those indigenous inhabitants who had imbued themselves with Greek culture and manners. The most numerous class of the population would be the Lycaonians, rough and uncultured, from the country round. In these conditions we have an almost exact parallel to many of the country towns in India, more especially those in the hill districts. A small body of Europeans holding themselves aloof may answer to the Roman colonists. The educated Mussulmans and Hindus represent the Jews and Greeks by whom the business of the city is carried on. The crowd of aboriginal inhabitants, mostly poor and uneducated, form the main part of the population. Between the last three classes no very sharp line of demarcation exists. The aboriginals may at any time rise to the level of the educated. The Mahomedans and Hindus mix together freely in the ordinary affairs of life. They draw the line however at intermarriage, whereas between the Jews and Greeks of such a city as Lystra marriage might occasionally take place, as in the case of Timothy's parents, though owing to the difference of religion and

the abhorrence of the stricter Jews for idolatry it could not have been common.”¹

Derbe.

Less is known of Derbe than of any of the other towns visited by Paul. There was no synagogue at either Lystra or Derbe, so there cannot have been many Jews in these towns. Derbe was on the high road from Iconium to Cilicia, and from A.D. 41–72 the frontier city of the province. According to Ramsay, “it was one of the rudest of the Pauline cities, education had made no great progress in it, and therefore it was not fitted to produce a strong impression on the history of the Church or of Asia Minor.”

THE GALATIAN CHURCH.

There are three visits to the Churches in South Galatia recorded in the Acts. It was on the Apostle's First Missionary Journey that the Church was founded in the cities of Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe, and the details of this visit may be read in Acts, chapters 13 and 14. Persecuted in every place, the missionaries nevertheless succeeded in establishing a Christian community in the four cities, consisting mainly of Gentile converts, but including a certain number of Jews. On their return from this journey they found themselves faced by an unexpected difficulty. The success of their

¹ E. F. Brown, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p. xi.

mission excited the suspicion of the narrow Jewish Christians in the Church, who demanded that the Gentile converts should be circumcised and should submit to the Jewish Law before being admitted to the Church. The whole question was brought up and discussed at the Council of Jerusalem (Acts 15¹⁻²²), and the result was a victory for "the party of Liberty" and the defeat of the Judaizers. The Decrees of the Council ordained that circumcision and the keeping of the Law of Moses were not to be required of Gentile converts, but they were expected to refrain from certain things associated with idolatrous worship.

It was after the Council at Jerusalem that Paul paid his second visit to the Galatian Churches (Acts 16¹⁻⁶). On this occasion Paul, accompanied by Silas, approached Galatia from the east, reaching Derbe first and delivering the Decrees of the Council as he passed through the cities. Luke tells us briefly of this journey that "the churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily."

In Acts 18²³ we hear of the third visit: Luke does not say which way the Apostle travelled at this time, but simply that "he went through the region of Galatia and Phrygia in order, stablishing all the disciples."

The letter to the Galatians was probably written shortly before his third visit, and the occasion of it was this. News came to the Apostle that the Judaizers, defeated at Jerusalem, were at work in Galatia, and that the Churches had rejected his authority and were conforming to the rites and ceremonies of the Jewish

religion. Judaism had many points of contact with the old Phrygian religion, and its elaborate ceremonial ritual and severe self-discipline were likely to make a strong appeal to the Galatians. "These Phrygians and others of Asia Minor who had witnessed the wild, orgiastic rites of Cybele, who had even known fanatics mutilate themselves in the frenzy of their devotion, were not the men to shrink from a religion that exacted much. They were ready to despise an easy road if a more arduous path were set before them. The very severity of the discipline would constitute its fascination." (Adeney.) It was to counteract these influences and to indicate his own apostleship that Paul wrote his letter to the Galatians. There is no evidence that the Galatians had departed widely from the Gospel ; but some of them were wavering under the arguments of the Judaizers, and we gather that the Epistle confirmed them again in their faith and settled the question of Gentile liberty once and for all.

ROMAN EDUCATION.

When a boy was about seven years old he was sent to school for the elementary stage of his education, which consisted, as with us, of the three "R's," writing, reading, and arithmetic. His first lessons in writing were done upon a flat piece of wood, thinly coated with wax, upon which he traced his letters with a *stilus*, or metal stiletto, pointed at one end and flat at the other ; with the point he scratched the characters on the wax-covered tablet, and with the other end he

smoothed the wax to make some necessary correction, or "to clean his slate." To learn reading he repeated after the master, in the orthodox sing-song way, first the letters, then the syllables, and then the whole word. In arithmetic, he learned to calculate partly by using his fingers and partly by means of counters strung on a board; and he had also to get up by heart the various tables of weights and measures. "Two-and-a-half feet one step; two steps one pace; a thousand paces one mile." (Tucker.)

When he was twelve or thirteen he passed to the next stage of his education and was placed under a *grammaticus*, who might be a Roman or a Greek. The school book was Homer—which was considered indispensable for the study of language, history, religion, manners, geography—and along with the Greek Homer such Roman authors as Livy, Terence, and Virgil, and later on, Horace, were also studied. In the final stage of his education the pupil passed under the *rhetor*, where training was given to fit him for the duties of public life—style, delivery, and oratory.

In the days of the apostles it was the custom for a family to employ a Greek *pædagogus*, frequently a superior slave, to watch over the morals and behaviour of the boy at home and in the streets, and to accompany him as he went to and from the school. When Paul says, "The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ" (Gal. 3²⁴), the word which he employs does not mean "schoolmaster" or "tutor." It means this *pædagogus* whose business it was to conduct the children

to school. Christ is the one teacher, says Paul, and the Law is simply a servant to bring men to Him.

Writing to the Corinthians, Paul says, "Though ye should have ten thousand *tutors* in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I begat you through the gospel. I beseech you therefore, be ye imitators of me" (1 Cor. 4^{15, 16}). It is the figure of the *pædagogus* once more, and Paul is applying it here to the officious supervisors of the Church at Corinth. What he says in effect is this: "However many pedagogues you may have, I am your true father in Christ. It was I who gave you your entrance into the spiritual privileges which you possess, and it is my ways and character which you should imitate."

NOTES.

Gal. 1⁸ *Hermes*.—When St. Paul writes, "But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema," he may be referring to the incident at Lystra, where the cure of a cripple led to a scene of wild excitement. The native population thought that he and Barnabas were gods come down from heaven and sought to worship them. Barnabas, the elder and more reserved, was held, in accordance with Oriental ideas, to be the superior, and was acclaimed as Zeus, the guardian deity of the city. Paul, the younger man and the spokesman, appeared to them to fill the part of Hermes, the messenger of the gods. The scene of the old legend, according to which Zeus and Hermes came to earth and were welcomed in their humble home by the aged peasants Baucis and Philemon, was laid in this neighbourhood. As there was also a temple of Zeus outside the walls of the city

the people jumped to the conclusion that they were once more receiving a visit of their gods. There may be another reference to this incident in Paul's words, "Ye received me as *an angel of God*" (4¹⁴).

Gal. 2¹² *Eating with Gentiles.*—No good Jew eats with Gentiles, because Gentile food is "unclean," and the Pharisees, especially, regarded such an act with horror. "This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." But Peter had been taught by the heavenly vision to "call no man common or unclean" (Acts 10²⁸). The custom of the Agapæ, or love feasts, made this an important question. To refuse to eat with Gentiles would mean not only to withdraw from them in social life but to decline to meet them at Holy Communion and the feasts of brotherly love.

Gal. 3¹⁹ "*The law . . . was ordained through angels.*"—"The Rabbis held that angels assisted in the giving of the law, basing the idea on the words 'he came from the ten thousands of holy ones' (Deut. 33²). This idea is referred to in Stephen's speech (Acts 7⁵³). It is also found in Josephus. Paul mentions it here to indicate the inferiority of the law to the covenant which God gave directly to Abraham." (Adeney.)

Gal. 6² "*Bear ye one another's burdens.*"—The word for "burdens" means a heavy weight. The metaphor is no doubt suggested by the familiar figure of the Oriental 'atal, or burden bearer. "Our Lord plainly refers to the toil of the 'atal when, denouncing the cruelly oppressive ceremonial traditions forced upon the masses by the hypocritical scribes and Pharisees, He tells us that these spiritual task-masters 'bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders, but they themselves will not move them with their finger.' " (Neil.)

Gal. 6¹¹ "*See with how large letters I have written unto you with mine own hand.*"—Paul, as Dr. Milligan suggests, may have dispensed with an amanuensis in writing this severe letter to the Galatians. It has been thought that the "large letters" refer to the Apostle's difficulty in writing with hands roughened by his daily toil.

More probably the "large letters" are used for emphasis, to draw attention to the importance of what he is going to write—that is to say, the verses from 6¹⁰ to the end of the Epistle. Sir William Ramsay has pointed out that larger letters were sometimes used in a document to call attention to important points.

The following articles also bear upon Galatians :

Covenants, vol. i. p. 103.

The Rite of Circumcision, vol. i. p. 191.

Slavery in New Testament Times, p. 288.

1 CORINTHIANS.

CORINTH.

Corinth, in the time of St. Paul, was the commercial and political capital of the Roman province Achaia, and in size, in wealth, in commerce, the most important city in Greece. Its position was sufficient in itself to make it so. Lying as it did at the southern extremity of the narrow isthmus connecting the Peloponnesus with the mainland of Greece, it commanded the roads from the north and the south. More than this, it was on the great line of communication between Rome and the East, and its two harbours, Lechæum on the west and Cenchreæ on the east, were full of ships from every known country of the time. Cape Malea, at the extreme south of Greece, with its dangerous currents and rough seas, was greatly dreaded by seamen. "When you round Malea," they said, "forget your home." It was safer and it was also shorter to sail up the Corinthian

Gulf, tranship the cargoes of large vessels, or, in the case of smaller ships, haul them bodily across the isthmus from sea to sea on a prepared track, 5 miles long, called the Diolkos. As the seat of a proconsul, as a centre of trade, as a place delightful for its climate, and as the scene of the famous Isthmian games, Corinth attracted many strangers from every part, and the city was crowded at all times with traders and travellers.

But the Corinth of Paul's day was not the original city. That had been plundered and burned to the ground by the Romans in 146 B.C., and for a century it lay desolate until Julius Caesar restored it in 46 B.C., and established a Roman colony on the site of the old city under the name of Colonia Laus Julia Corinthus. The city quickly recovered its former prosperity. By the Apostle's time it was once more the emporium of Greece, a busy commercial centre, with a population of 600,000 inhabitants, large numbers of whom were slaves. The descendants of the Roman colonists formed, in all probability, the aristocracy of the city; but the majority of the citizens were Greek, and among other incomers of various nationalities there was a large representation of Jews.

“What, then, were the main characteristics of Corinth? It was a city of pleasure, a city of trade, a city of very varied thought and interests.

“(a) It was *a city of pleasure*, perhaps the most immoral city in the world. The characteristic worship of Corinth had been that of the sea-god Poseidon, now it was the worship of Aphrodite, the goddess of lust.

Thousands of courtesans were attached to her temple. The worship of Aphrodite at Corinth was, like the worship of Artemis at Ephesus, an Eastern worship under a Greek name. What must have been the condition of a city where such was the religion? We may be appalled by the vice of Paris, or Vienna, or London in our own time, but at least it is not consecrated by religious sanctions. At Corinth, as in India to-day, it was so. Thus Corinth was the chosen resort of the vicious. A 'Corinthian,' as in the days of the Regency in England, was a synonym for a man of pleasure. On the stage, the Corinthian was usually represented drunk. St. Paul's terrible indictment of heathen vice (Rom. 1²¹⁻³²) was written from Corinth.

"(b) It was *a city of trade*. The Corinthians had the virtues and the vices of traders—activity, earnestness, initiative on the one hand, love of money, love of comfort, self-complacency, suspiciousness of others on the other. And this, as St. Paul's Epistles show, affected the Church at Corinth. It was full of life and vigour; nowhere did Christians take a fuller part for themselves in all the activities that the Spirit had made possible for them. Yet nowhere has St. Paul to speak more strongly of the sins of covetousness and litigiousness (5^{10.11} 6¹⁻¹⁰), nowhere was there such shrinking from self-denial (4⁸⁻¹³), nowhere was St. Paul so little trusted, or his sacrifices so little appreciated (9¹⁻¹⁹, 2 Cor. 1¹⁷ 12¹⁴⁻¹⁸).

"(c) It was *a city of great intellectual activity*. . . . In

Greece, as in Germany in more modern days, the time of national prostration was the time of devotion to philosophy. At Corinth, it was especially so. The city, splendidly rich in works of art, was rich also in halls of rhetoric and schools of philosophy. Travelling professors and lecturers were common. Yet all this activity left little or no result. The Greece of the great days has given us some of the noblest literature in the world; the Greece of St. Paul's day has given us little of permanent value. Corinth itself has left us nothing at all. The Greeks loved disputation for its own sake as the Hindoos love it to-day. Just as the gymnastic of the body, in spite of their devotion to it, utterly failed in St. Paul's time to rear a manly race, so the gymnastic of the mind failed to rear an intellectually fruitful race." ¹

THE CHURCH AT CORINTH.

St. Paul entered Corinth alone, probably in the year A.D. 50, in the course of his Second Missionary Journey, and remained there eighteen months. He found a home with Aquila, a Jew of Pontus, and his wife Priscilla, tentmakers like himself, who had lately come from Rome, and he seems to have confined himself at first to work among the Jews in the synagogue. But when the Jews rejected his message the Apostle turned to the Gentiles. He had been joined by Timothy and

¹ H. L. Goudge, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, pp. xv.-xvii.

Silas from Macedonia, and a new meeting-place was found for the Christian congregation in a house next door to the synagogue, the home of a proselyte called Titus Justus. The Jews, as on previous occasions, showed themselves bitterly opposed to the work, and eventually they rose in a body against the Apostle and haled him before the Proconsul Gallio, brother of the Stoic philosopher Seneca, accusing him of teaching contrary to the law. Gallio, however, paid them little attention and dismissed the case with contemptuous indifference. Not long after this the Apostle left Corinth in the spring of the year A.D. 52.

During the year and a half which Paul spent in Corinth his evangelistic efforts were crowned with considerable success. The Church grew rapidly. Most of its members were drawn from the Gentiles and from the lower classes in the city, but there were a few influential Jews, the most prominent being Crispus, the head of the synagogue; and we must believe that such men as Stephanas and Titus Justus were well-to-do.

From Corinth Paul crossed to Ephesus, taking with him Aquila and Priscilla. He then went on himself to Jerusalem, and after a short stay there set out to visit the Galatian Churches, returning in the autumn to Ephesus. Except during the winter months there was frequent intercourse between Corinth and Ephesus, and it was not difficult for Paul to keep in touch with the Church. His first letter to the Christian community, referred to in 1 Cor. 5⁹, has not been handed down to us, but it apparently contained a warning against

associating with people guilty of immorality, and it is believed that a fragment of the letter has been preserved in 2 Cor. 6¹⁴–7¹. To this letter the Corinthian Church sent a reply of a rather unsatisfactory nature. About the same time news reached the Apostle, through the servants of a Christian lady called Chloe, that the Church was being divided into factions calling themselves by the names of Paul and Apollos and Peter and even of Christ. He also learned of a flagrant case of immorality, a member of the Church having formed an incestuous alliance with his stepmother. Further information of the condition of things at Corinth was conveyed to him by three members of the Church, Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus (the two last probably slaves in the household of Stephanas). What he heard from these various sources determined Paul to send Timothy to Corinth, and at the same time he dispatched a letter by sea to the Christian community. That letter is the First Epistle to the Corinthians.

There was much to cause Paul grave anxiety in the reports he had received. “The proverbial party spirit of the Greeks had made itself felt even within the Christian brotherhood, and rival factions were appearing which threatened to put an end to the peace and unity of the Church.” Paul speaks of four parties. “Now this I mean,” he writes in 1 Cor. 1¹², “that each one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ.”

Apollos was an Alexandrian Jew, “a learned (or eloquent) man, and mighty in the scriptures” (Acts 18²⁴),

who had taken Paul's place when the Apostle left Corinth. His preaching proved a strong attraction to the Corinthians, and no doubt its philosophical character was preferred by some to the simpler gospel of Paul; but Paul and Apollos were in no sense rivals. "I planted, Apollos watered," says the Apostle, and "he that planteth and he that watereth are one" (1 Cor. 3⁶⁻⁸). And Apollos is with him in Ephesus when he writes his letter to the Corinthians.

The party of Peter probably consisted of those who had come into personal contact with the Apostle of the Circumcision in Jerusalem or elsewhere. There is no evidence that Peter had ever visited Corinth. But who were the party who called themselves "of Christ"? It may be that they claimed a personal relation to or acquaintance with Jesus, and on the strength of this pretended to go behind all Apostolic authority. It is usually supposed that this party included the more extreme Judaizers to whom Paul makes frequent references in the Second Epistle.

Worse even than this factious spirit was the report of immoral conduct in the Church. It was at Corinth that Paul drew that dark picture of heathen immorality which we have in Rom. 1¹⁸⁻³²; and in a long list in 1 Cor. 6⁹⁻¹¹ of those who cannot enter the Kingdom of God he names, among others, adulterers, thieves, drunkards, adding at the close, "And such were some of you"—a sentence which shows the tremendous difficulties which Christianity had to face in the Grecian world of that time.

“Business also brought the Christians into touch with the outside world, and wherever business was carried on by such a system of mutual fraud and overreaching as prevailed in the ancient world—and to this day in southern countries—disputes were bound to arise.” (Dobschütz.) “Corinth was a paradise for gentlemen of the long robe, for lawsuits were one of the delights and boasts of the Greek, and knavery, on one side or other, brought a plentiful crop of these before the courts, even between Christian and Christian. The sorry sight was thus offered, of those, who, as Paul tells them, were, at the last day to judge mankind and even the angels, appearing in the *Prætorium* with complaints against each other; seeking a decision of them from the heathen court.” (Geikie.)

The religious assemblies of the Church, also, were frequently marked by disorderly scenes, several prophesying at once, others speaking with tongues; women were appearing in public with head unveiled, like the women of loose morals, and speaking in these assemblies, which shocked some of their Christian friends and brought suspicion upon the Church; even the Lord's Supper was leading to excesses in eating and drinking and arousing jealousies and bitterness among the converts. Some Christians were making a parade of their liberty and accepting invitations from their heathen friends to attend banquets in the temples. And there were some who were expressing doubts about the resurrection of the body. Such were the difficulties and dangers which the Apostle had to meet, and he

handles them one by one, completely and successfully, in the First Epistle to the Corinthians.

THE CHURCH MEETINGS.

The early Christians held their meetings in private houses. Some convert, whose house was large enough for the purpose, would place it at the service of the Apostles, and around it the community would gather. As the numbers of believers grew, several houses would be required and each would be a centre for a small congregation. Thus at the close of the Epistle to the Romans, Paul sends greetings to three of these house-churches (Rom. 16³⁻⁵. 14. 15). It would only be some well-to-do member of the community who had a house large enough to accommodate the whole Church in an important centre. Such a one apparently was Gaius at Corinth, who is spoken of as the "host of the whole church." For the most part the brethren met in smaller groups, and these groups were known as "the church in the house" of Aquila and Priscilla at Rome, of Philemon at Colossæ, or of Nymphas in Laodicea. A parallel in later days may be found in the house-churches of Reformation times in France, or in the house-conventicles of the Covenanters in Scotland.

There appear to have been three different kinds of meetings, one for worship and instruction, another for the common meal and the Lord's Supper, and a third for Church business. But the distinction between meetings for worship and meetings for business was

not clearly drawn, and no doubt the practical affairs of the community were discussed at public worship also.

1. Of the meeting for worship we have a picture in 1 Corinthians. In the body of the room the congregation is seated, the men probably on one side and the women on the other. Behind them are the enquirers or catechumens, and still farther back some of the general public. Jewish converts, Greeks, Romans, Asiatics, freedmen and slaves, wealthy traders, shopkeepers, and humble workmen, women of education and position, and women of the lowest classes—such are the diverse elements of which the congregation is composed.

“The service, and probably each part of the service, began with the benediction: ‘Grace be to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,’ which was followed by an invocation of Jesus and the confession that He is Lord. One of the brethren began to pray; then another and another; one began the Lord’s Prayer, and all joined; each prayer was followed by a hearty and fervent ‘Amen.’ Then a hymn was sung; then another and another, for several of the brethren have composed or selected hymns at home which they wish to be sung by the congregation. Several of these hymns are preserved in the New Testament, and one is embodied in one of our Scots phrases:

“ ‘To Him be pow’r divine ascrib’d,
And endless blessings paid;
Salvation, glory, joy, remain
For ever on His head!

Thou hast redeem'd us with Thy Blood,
And set the pris'ners free ;
Thou mad'st us kings and priests to God,
And we shall reign with Thee.

To Him that sits upon the throne,
The God whom we adore,
And to the Lamb that once was slain,
Be glory evermore.'

After the hymns came reading from the Old Testament Scriptures, and readings or recitations concerning the life and death, the sayings and deeds of Jesus. Then came the 'instruction'—sober words for edification, based on what had been read, and coming either from the gift of 'wisdom' or from that intuitive power of seeing into the heart of spiritual things which the Apostle calls 'knowledge.' Then came the moment of greatest expectancy. It was the time for the prophets, men who believed themselves and were believed by their brethren to be specially taught by the Holy Spirit, to take part. They started forward, the gifted men, so eager to impart what had been given them, that sometimes two or more rose at once and spoke together ; and sometimes, when one was speaking, the message came to another, and he leapt to his feet, increasing the emotion and taking from the edification. When the prophets were silent, first one, then another, and sometimes two at once, began strange ejaculatory prayers, in sentences so rugged and disjointed that the audience for the most part could not understand, and had to wait till some of their number, who could follow

the strange utterances, were ready to translate them into intelligible language. Then followed the benediction : ' The Grace of the Lord Jesus be with you all ' ; the ' kiss of peace ' ; and the congregation dispersed." ¹

2. Besides the meeting for worship and instruction which has just been described, there was another assembly which took place on the Lord's Day and which was confined to the brethren. This was the common meal or love-feast with which was joined the observance of the Lord's Supper. To the meal the partakers, rich and poor alike, brought their own contributions. Some of the brethren who were recognized to have the prophetic gift presided over the gathering, distributed the food, and also conducted the devotional services at the feast and at the Holy Supper.

Tertullian, in his *Defence of Christianity* (c. A.D. 197), gives this account of the love-feast. " As it is an act of religious service, it permits no vileness or immodesty. The participants, before sitting down to supper, taste first of prayer to God. As much is eaten as satisfies the cravings of hunger ; as much is drunk as befits the chaste. They say it is enough, since they remember they must worship God even at night ; they talk as those who know that the Lord is one of their hearers. After washing of hands, lights are brought in, and each is asked to stand forth and sing, as he can, a hymn to God, either one from the holy Scriptures or one of his own composing—a proof of the moderation of our

¹ T. M. Lindsay, *The Church and the Ministry in the Early Centuries*, p. 44f.

drinking. As the feast began with prayer, so also it is closed with prayer."

But at Corinth scandals had arisen in connection with the feast, because the rich consumed their own provisions in haste and neglected the needs of the poorer brethren, and what should have been a feast of love had become an exhibition of selfishness and drunkenness. In condemning these abuses, Paul reminds the Corinthians that the Lord's Supper is not an ordinary supper as eaten at home ; it is not a meal primarily to satisfy appetite, but a supper of communion with the Lord and His people and a solemn commemoration of the Lord's death.

In the time of the Apostles the love-feast was united with the Holy Supper and the memorial part might either begin or end the meal. In later days the two were separated, and the love-feast became a mere entertainment or a feast provided by rich people for the poor.

3. In addition to the meetings for worship there must have been occasions when the brethren came together to discuss matters affecting the common life of the community. The business might be the appointment of officials, the settling of disputes between one Christian and another, or the exercise of discipline. Letters were sent from the meeting asking the Apostle's advice on questions of practical morality. It furnished letters of commendation to Christians travelling to other churches ; made arrangements for hospitality and managed the finance.

Such is the picture of a Christian Church in the days of the Apostles as revealed in Paul's letter to the

Corinthians. It has its meetings for edification and instruction which all may attend and in which there is entire freedom of worship; its meetings for thanksgiving, confined to believers, where the common meal and the Holy Supper are celebrated; its business meetings, where the practical affairs of the Church are regulated.

NOTES.

- 8¹⁻¹² *Meats offered to idols.*—When a sacrifice was offered in a temple, the meat not consumed was often sold in the public market, and so found its way to the table of a private house. Was it wrong for a Christian to partake of such meat? The Jews had their own butchers, because the law forbade the consumption of the blood of an animal. But it is with the Gentile Christians that Paul is specially concerned here. Some held that the idol was nothing, and went so far as to take part even in the temple feasts. But others could not get rid of the idea that there was something real about the idol, and that the meat offered in sacrifice was “polluted.” The former are regarded as “the strong” and the latter as “the weak.” Paul’s decision is that idol-meat may be eaten in private houses, except when there is danger to the conscience of the weaker brethren; but he forbids eating such meat at a banquet in the temple, when the meal has clearly a religious nature.
- 10¹⁶ *The cup of blessing.*—One of the cups at the Jewish Passover meal bore this name. “It was the third which the father of the family circulated in the course of the feast; he did so while pronouncing over it a thanksgiving prayer for all God’s benefits in nature and toward Israel” (Godet).
- 13³ “*if I give my body to be burned.*”—Dr. Lightfoot has made the interesting suggestion that Paul may have seen at Athens the tomb of an Indian fanatic who, to draw attention to his faith, burnt himself alive in the market-place in the presence of a great crowd and perhaps of the Emperor Augustus himself. The “Tomb of the Indian” was one of the sights shown to strangers at Athens.

2 CORINTHIANS.

ST. PAUL'S THIRD AND FOURTH LETTERS TO THE CORINTHIANS.

It seems probable that after sending First Corinthians the Apostle paid a brief visit to Corinth, a visit marked by painful and humiliating experiences, and from which he returned to Ephesus in great distress of mind. The outcome of this visit was a letter, written under the stress of strong personal feeling, which he sent by the hand of Titus to the Church. Paul refers to this letter in 2 Cor. 2^d, "Out of much affliction and anguish of heart," he says, "I wrote unto you with many tears," and it is generally held that the letter is to be found, either wholly or in part, in 2 Cor. 10-13, which is quite different in tone from the earlier part of the Epistle. Before Titus returned, Paul was compelled to leave Ephesus, and journeyed to Troas, hoping to meet Titus there, and to receive news of the Church. But Titus had not arrived, and in great anxiety Paul hurried forward into Macedonia. Here Titus at last met him and brought Paul the welcome news that the Corinthians had taken his severe reproof to heart, and were ashamed of their past attitude towards him, and anxious now to prove their loyalty by carrying out his wishes. The Apostle, full of joy, at once wrote to them the letter which we have in 2 Cor. 1-9.

It appears, then, that Paul wrote four letters to the Corinthian Church : (1) the first letter : 2 Cor. 6¹⁴-7¹ ;

(2) the second letter : our First Corinthians ; (3) the third letter, written after his short and painful visit to Corinth : 2 Cor. 10-13 ; (4) the fourth letter, expressing his thankfulness that harmony had been restored in the Church and the old relations re-established : 2 Cor. 1-9, omitting the fragment of six verses referred to above as the first letter. Apparently the letters were joined together in later years. After the Apostle's death his followers began to think of making a collection of his letters, and went round the Churches with this object. Some of the Churches evidently had not kept all the letters they had received, and we can imagine that the Church at Corinth had not taken particular care to preserve those which were a memorial of her shame and disloyalty. At any rate the disciple who came to Corinth found only one long and complete letter, and after making a copy of it he marked the papyrus roll Corinthians I. He then collected the three shorter letters, or what remained of them, arranged them in the way which he thought most appropriate, and copied them on to another roll, numbering it Corinthians II.

The situation at Corinth which called forth the Apostle's third letter was briefly as follows : The hostile party in the Church, probably that " of Christ," had been growing steadily in influence, and had been further strengthened by the arrival of agitators from Jerusalem, who professed themselves to be the true apostles of Christ, and sought to impose their narrow Jewish views upon the Church, preaching, according to Paul, " another Jesus, another spirit, another gospel." Their presence

in the city was reported to the Apostle, perhaps by Timothy, and he immediately sailed for Corinth. But he found that the situation was beyond his control, and he seems also to have experienced some personal insult. It may have been that he was suffering at this time from that weakness which he calls his "thorn in the flesh," and was physically unable to deal with the difficulties at Corinth. In any case he left the city and journeyed to Ephesus, and from there sent this sharp letter to the Church by Titus. From the letter we learn the charges made against the Apostle by his enemies at Corinth. They denied his authority and apostleship; they attacked his character and ridiculed his person and speech and the simplicity of his teaching; they mocked him for his mildness at Corinth, and declared that he was bold at a distance, but weak and ineffective face to face; they insinuated the worst motives for his refusal to take payment for his work, and said that he supported himself out of the collections. Weak, fickle, crafty, boastful, contemptible in speech and appearance—such is their picture of the Apostle. Their attack was a personal one, and the reply is almost wholly a personal defence.

The effect of this letter was all that Paul could have wished. Titus, returning from Corinth, brought the good news that his enemies had given way, and that the Church had punished the person who had wronged him, and renewed its loyalty. In great relief and gladness Paul wrote his fourth and last letter to the Corinthian Church. After the salutation he speaks of his recent escape from peril of death. He then gives his reasons

for not coming to Corinth, as he had promised he would do after sending his previous letter. The change in his plans was made on their account, to spare them a sorrowful visit. He passes on to review his ministry among them, its methods and motives, and its sufferings, and closes with an appeal for a place in their hearts. This constitutes the first section of the letter, chapters 1-7. The second section (8, 9) deals with the collection for the poor at Jerusalem, and the Apostle appeals to the Corinthians to give generously, reminding them of the liberality of the Macedonian Churches, and urging them to have everything ready for him when he arrives.

RELIGIOUS ECSTASY.

In the Old Testament, prophecy is very often closely connected with ecstatic conditions. The Spirit of God is represented as taking possession of the prophet, filling him with power, carrying him out of himself, moving him to prophesy even against his own will ; and this state is marked by great mental excitement. Thus, under the contagious ecstasy of the prophets whom he joined, Saul "stripped off his clothes, and he also prophesied before Samuel, and lay down naked all that day and all that night" (1 Sam. 19²⁴). Balaam, when he utters his oracles, is described as "falling down" (in a trance) with the eye of flesh closed, but with the inward eye open to "the vision of the Almighty" (Num. 24⁴). In the Moabitish campaign, when the allied kings seek the counsel of Elisha, the prophet first calls for a

minstrel to induce the ecstatic state. "And it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him" (2 Kings 3¹⁵). But the most striking Old Testament illustration is to be found in Ezekiel. His prophetic career opened with a vision of the Divine glory, and again there is the expression "the hand of the Lord was upon him" (Ezek. 1³), indicating that the revelations he received came to him in a state of ecstasy. When he saw the vision he fell, like Paul, upon the ground. God spoke to him out of heaven and the Spirit entered into him and set him upon his feet.

When we come to the New Testament, the incidents of the Day of Pentecost and other phenomena show that we are moving in an atmosphere similar to that of the Old Testament. The conditions of ecstasy, or trance, are present in the account of Paul's conversion—the "light," the "falling to the earth," the "voice from heaven." The vision of the Apostle Peter is also, on his own showing, of the same ecstatic character (Acts 11⁵); while Paul similarly describes his condition when the revelation came to him in the Temple at Jerusalem (Acts 22¹⁷).

In 2 Cor. 12¹⁻⁵ the Apostle narrates a personal experience which belongs most clearly to the ecstatic type, and is closely parallel to the visions and ecstasies in Jewish apocalypses, in Philo, Plotinus, Suso, and later mystics.

"I know a man in Christ, fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I know not; or whether out of the body, I know not; God knoweth), such a one caught up

even to the third heaven. And I know such a man (whether in the body, or apart from the body, I know not; God knoweth), how that he was caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter."

In almost similar language Suso, the German mystic, tells how, "in the first days after his conversion," being all alone in the choir, his soul was suddenly rapt "in his body or out of his body," and he saw and heard that which no tongue can express. This ecstasy lasted for nearly an hour, and "when he came to his senses it seemed to him that he returned from another world."

Under the influence of the outpouring of the Spirit the early Church was kept in a continual glow of religious fervour and excitation. All, or nearly all, without distinction of sex or social position, were endowed with special spiritual gifts, and the words spoken by the prophet Joel received their fulfilment :

"And it shall be in the last days, saith God,
I will pour forth of my Spirit upon all flesh :
And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
And your young men shall see visions,
And your old men shall dream dreams :
Yea and on my servants and on my handmaidens in those
days
Will I pour forth of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy"
(Acts 2^{17. 18}).

"There was an enthusiasm of faith and hope such as Judaism had never known. In all times of religious convulsion and revival ecstatic manifestations have

sprung up as if from the soil ; they were familiar enough at the Reformation ; how natural that they should have emerged in the greatest religious revival the world has seen.”¹

One gift which the members of the Church at Corinth seem to have specially desired was to be able to “ speak with tongues.” What was this mysterious gift ? Dr. Marcus Dods gives the generally accepted view. “ The gift of tongues,” he says, “ did not consist in ability to speak a foreign language even temporarily, but in an exalted frame of mind which found expression in sounds or words belonging to no human language. What was thus uttered has been compared to the ‘ merry, unmeaning shouts of boyhood, getting rid of exuberant life, uttering in sounds a joy for which manhood has no words.’ These ecstatic cries or exclamations were not always understood either by the person uttering them, or by any one else, so that there was always a risk of such utterances being considered either as the ravings of lunatics, or, as in the first instance, the thick and inarticulate mutterings of drunkards. But sometimes there was present a person in the same key of feeling whose spirit vibrated to the note struck by the speaker, and who was able to render his inarticulate sounds into intelligible speech. For as music can only be interpreted by one who has a feeling for music, and as the inarticulate language of tears, or sighs, or groans can be comprehended by a sympathetic soul, so the tongues could be interpreted by those

¹ W. Morgan, *The Religion and Theology of Paul*, p. 169.

whose spiritual state corresponded to that of the gifted person."

Religious ecstasy has been a frequent phenomenon of the Church all through its history. The Montanists of the Mediæval Church, the Camisards of France at the close of the seventeenth century, and the Irvingites in England laid claim to these special gifts. In the last case, especially, there are parallels to many of the phenomena described in the New Testament.

"It is one of the many signal services which Paul rendered to the Church that he placed these things in their right position. He found the most conspicuous and valuable tokens of the Spirit's presence and working, not in such showy gifts as speaking with tongues, but in those gifts which tended to edification, in the transformation and enrichment of character, and above all in the supreme gift and grace of love. Thus he saved the Church from being carried forward on false lines and set it in the way of a true moral and religious development." ¹

NOTES.

³¹ *Epistles of commendation*.—"These were very common in the early Church. Between the little Christian communities men and women were constantly passing back and forth. These disciples were cared for by the brothers of the church wherever they went, and would not think of stopping at a public inn. Among them would be leaders of the church, including apostles and disciples. The churches would help these on their way, as Paul expected help from the Roman church on the way to Spain. To prevent imposture, letters of commendation or introduction were written, and were

¹ A. S. Peake, *The Bible*, p. 389.

either sent direct or given to the person whom they concerned, just as is done to-day. Paul's enemies in Corinth had probably brought such letters from Jerusalem. In a similar way Paul writes to commend Timothy, and later on Titus, to the Corinthian church, and letters from Ephesus paved the way for Apollos when he went to Corinth" (Rall).

12⁴ *Paradise*.—This is a Persian word, meaning "park" or "garden," which passed into Hebrew literature as the name for the Garden of Eden, and in course of time came to be used for the blissful abode of the righteous after death. Sometimes it is thought of as on the earth, sometimes as above the earth, sometimes, as here, in heaven. In the *Secrets of Enoch*, written about the first century, Paradise is located in the third heaven

ROMANS.

THE CHURCH AT ROME.

We read in Acts that while he was in Ephesus Paul "purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome." That mighty city, the head and heart of the great Roman Empire, was immensely attractive to him. He had longed for years to carry the gospel there and see it firmly established at the centre of the civilized world. And now that his missionary work in the East seemed to be finished, the troubles of the Churches settled, and his authority re-established, he felt free at last to carry out his long-cherished plan. One thing he still had to do. He had to return to Jerusalem with the money collected by the Churches for the poor in Jerusalem. As soon as he had discharged that duty he would make

his way to Rome. And so, writing from Corinth on the eve of his journey, the Apostle sent his Epistle to the Christians at Rome to prepare them for his personal visit; and at the same time he took the opportunity of setting before them the main elements of his teaching and gospel.

In speaking of this visit Paul recognized that it was of a different character from his visits to Churches founded by himself. Christianity was no new religion in Rome. It had already been brought to Rome while Paul was engaged in his missionary work in the East. The Roman Catholic tradition that Peter was the founder of the Church there has no support in this Epistle, and it is perfectly evident that Paul knew nothing of any previous work of Peter in Rome. We are told, however, in Acts that "sojourners from Rome, both Jews and proselytes," formed part of Peter's congregation on the day of Pentecost, and it is probable that these men brought the first news of the gospel home with them. No doubt the Church would be constantly gaining by the arrival of Christians from various parts of the empire, for there was a steady movement towards Rome from all quarters, and some of these would be certain to be converts of the Apostle. Paul writes, indeed, as if he had a personal acquaintance with a number of the members of the Church. There was both a Jewish and a Gentile element in the Church, but the Epistle makes it clear that the majority was Gentile, and it is as the Apostle of the Gentiles that Paul claims to address them.

The letter, although written expressly for the Christians at Rome, has a different character from Paul's earlier Epistles, and partakes more of the nature of a treatise than a letter pure and simple. All the same, it is clear that Paul was well informed about the condition of the Church, and he keeps its special needs and difficulties in mind in his Epistle. "It seems," says Professor Currie Martin, "as if the great problems that concern the community were those of Faith, in its Jewish interpretation, and the aspects it assumed in the teaching of Paul. We learn from the close of Acts that these were the questions discussed by him and his fellow-countrymen on the occasion of his visit to Rome, and that helps us to understand the prominent place occupied by these subjects in this letter. It deals with them in a more leisurely and reasoned fashion than does the Galatian letter, and we can see how reflection upon past controversies has enabled the writer in some ways to make his positions clear, and to relate them to other problems. It is not so much a compendium of Christian doctrine as it is a discussion of the nature of faith in relation to righteousness—(1) as the gift of God bestowed upon us in Christ, and (2) as the fruit of the new life wrought in us by the spirit of Christ. The strong contrast that is thus involved with the righteousness that was thought to be attainable through the law involves Paul in the discussion of the position of Israel to this new righteousness offered to all men in Christ Jesus, and gives him the opportunity of working out his splendid vindication of the Divine purpose with

regard to his own people, and for the setting forth of his own philosophy of history. The twelfth and thirteenth chapters contain fine practical teaching on the Christian life as expressed in the individual, the Church, and the State."

The Epistle, as we have said, was written from Corinth, and its date is probably about the year A.D. 58. Paul was hoping to be in Rome in a few months' time, but this design was frustrated by his enemies in Jerusalem, and two years passed before he reached Rome, and then as a prisoner.

ADOPTION.

St. Paul is the only one of the New Testament writers to use the term "adoption." This is not surprising, because adoption was not a custom among the Jews, and, in a legal sense, was absolutely unknown. On the other hand, the custom was a common one among the Greeks and Romans, and as a Roman citizen Paul was familiar with it and with the legal ceremonies which belonged to it.

Under Roman law an entire stranger by blood might be adopted into a family and become a member of that family, holding the same position in it as a son born in marriage. According to Dr. Ball, he even became a member of the family in a higher sense than some who had the family blood in their veins, than emancipated sons or descendants through females. He assumed the family name, and took part in its mystic sacrificial rites. He could no more marry in the family of his adoption

within the prohibited degrees than those related by blood. He severed his connection completely with his former family, and in the eyes of the law he became so entirely a new personality that even his debts were cancelled.

Let us look at the process. In the presence of five witnesses and the *libripens* (one who held the balance, as if to weigh out money, at nominal sales), the son about to be adopted was sold three times by his father. According to the law of the Twelve Tables, if a father sold his son thrice he lost his paternal rights over him (*patria potestas*). A fictitious law-suit then followed, by which the person to be transferred was surrendered to the adopter, and the act was ratified in a set form of words.

As the form of adoption and that of a sale into slavery were very similar, the presence of witnesses was essential to testify to the real nature of the ceremony. That is why the Apostle says, "Ye received not the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father" (Rom. 8¹⁵). Suppose that the adopter has died and that the adopted son lays claim to the inheritance. His claim is refused; his status as a son is denied; it is declared that he was sold as a slave and that he has no legal right to the inheritance. So the son seeks the aid of the law-court. "No," he pleads, "the ceremony was that of adoption, the deceased claimed me by the name of son. He took me to his home. I called him father and he allowed it. . . . I sat at his table where

the slaves never sat. He told me the inheritance was mine." But the law requires corroborative evidence. One of the witnesses is called. "I was present," he says, "at the ceremony. It was I who held the scales and struck them with the ingot of brass. The transaction was not a sale into slavery. It was an adoption. I heard the words of vindication, and I say this person was claimed by the deceased not as a slave, but as a son."¹

And who is the witness to that spiritual adoption which makes us sons of God? It is the Third Person in the Trinity. "The Spirit himself beareth witness (along) with our spirit, that we are children of God."

NOTES.

¹²⁹ "*whisperers*."—The Roman Emperors went in continual fear of conspiracy and assassination, and one consequence of this was that the trade of the informer was a particularly flourishing and lucrative one. "The merest trifle—a word, a jest, a look, a gesture—was liable to a sinister construction, and was visited with condign vengeance. The only safety lay in fulsome adulation and denunciation of offences against the imperial majesty; and a law of Tiberius, assigning to the informer a share in his victim's property, encouraged the iniquity which darkened the life of Rome. . . . Juvenal speaks of an informer 'slitting throats with a fine-edged whisper'; and it is the informers that the Apostle has in view when he speaks of 'whisperers,' 'calumniators.' " (David Smith.)

²²² *Temple robbery*.—The fact that the town clerk of Ephesus declared that Paul and his companions were not "temple robbers" (Acts 19³⁷) shows that this was a charge to which the Jews were open in spite of their abhorrence of idolatry

¹ W. E. Ball, *Contemporary Review*, Aug. 1891.

and their professed fear of pollution. Pagan temples discharged some of the functions of a bank, and treasures were often deposited in them. Dr. Smith asserts that "the Jews of the Dispersion were notoriously addicted to temple-robbery, insomuch that a notion prevailed in the Gentile world that the name of their capital was originally *Hierosyla*, 'the Temple-robber,' and they had subsequently altered it to *Hierosolyma*."

The following articles also bear upon Romans :

- 16²² Letters and Letter-Writing in New Testament Days, p. 223.
The Rite of Circumcision, vol. 1. p. 191.

EPHESIANS.

AN ENCYCLICAL LETTER TO THE CHURCHES OF ASIA.

It was in the early stages of what is known as the Second Missionary Journey that Paul intended to preach the gospel in Ephesus, but was forbidden by the Spirit and directed to Macedonia. But later, on his way from Corinth to Syria, he visited Ephesus with Priscilla and Aquila, and left them there. At that time it was impossible for him to begin the work of evangelization, as he was hastening to Jerusalem. His second visit lasted for over two years—an unusually lengthy stay for the Apostle to make in any one centre. When he first arrived in the city he followed his customary rule of preaching in the synagogue; but after three months the opposition of the Jews compelled him to leave the synagogue, and for the next two years he taught in the school of Tyrannus. This was probably a lecture hall used by a professor of what

we may call the "Ephesian University," whose lectures would be over early in the day. Paul worked at his trade in the morning until eleven o'clock, and then in the afternoon, at the hottest period of the day, he occupied this hall. In the evening his work seems to have taken the form of personal visitation from house to house (Acts 20²⁰). All who dwelt in Asia, we are told, heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks; not that Paul himself was able to carry the gospel throughout the province, but he sent his disciples out into the surrounding country. "The seven Churches which, are in Asia," the Church of Colossæ, and the Church of Hierapolis, were probably all founded about this time.

Paul had been intending for some time to leave Ephesus when the disturbance caused by the silversmiths hastened his departure. "Demetrius made and sold the more expensive kind of images or shrines. He aroused the brotherhood of image-makers. It has been well said that the whole affair was the work of an unworthy unit of organized labour. The Roman Empire was more modern in many ways than is usually realized. Inscriptions and papyri tell not only of the labour unions, but also of trusts or corporations and even of the imperial regulation of prices by public proclamation. In Ephesus inscriptions mention in particular the brotherhoods of the workers-in-wool and of the surveyors." (Robinson.) Paul left Ephesus after the riot, and it does not appear that he visited the city again. The Churches were left in the charge of Timothy, with whom Mark was also associated.

The Epistle to the Ephesians belongs to the group of letters known as "the Epistles of the Captivity" and, like Philippians, Philemon, and Colossians, was written from Rome. It is held that this Epistle is a circular letter, designed for Ephesus in the first place, but at the same time for all the Churches in that district. "Tychicus may have been charged to read the letter in the churches through which he passed, finally depositing the autograph in Ephesus; or a number of copies may have been prepared at first for circulation from Ephesus, which was the most convenient centre for western Asia Minor. Ephesus being the metropolis of the province, and claiming a peculiar right in St. Paul, would naturally regard the document as specially its own; and it would become known to churches in other quarters through Ephesus."¹

The beauty of this Epistle and its sublimity of thought have impressed all classes of commentators in every age. Luther speaks of it as "one of the noblest books in the New Testament, which shows thee Christ and teaches thee everything which it is necessary for thee to know, even though thou shouldest never see or hear of any other book or doctrine." Coleridge says: "It is the divinest composition of man. It embraces every doctrine of Christianity; first, those doctrines peculiar to Christianity, and then those precepts common to it with natural religion." It has been called "the Epistle of the Heavenlies," "the Epistle of the Ascension," and its chapters, "the Alps of the New

¹ G. G. Findlay, *The Epistles of Paul the Apostle*, p. 179.

Testament.” “When St. Paul wrote this letter,” says Dr. Lock, “he was, as at Philippi, singing hymns in prison.” Dr. Hay calls it “the Christian’s 68th Psalm.” “Its language and imagery,” writes Professor Currie Martin, “have passed into the richest treasures of the church, and on them have been founded her finest hymns and most immortal allegories—from the glorious songs of Prudentius and Bernard to ‘The Church’s one Foundation’ of our own day; and the quaint homilies of the Middle Ages, no less than the marvellous works of the Puritan Bunyan, owe their suggestion to the picture of the Christian warrior.”

THE ROMAN ARMY.

In the days of the Empire the Roman army was divided into *legions* and *auxiliaries*, the former being recruited from freeborn citizens of good physique, the latter from various parts of the Empire. The legion was the “regiment” of the Roman army, and was divided into ten cohorts, each containing six centuries, or “hundreds” of men. The commanders of cohorts were called *tribunes*, and the commanders of centuries were called *centurions*, and corresponded in the main to our non-commissioned officers. The auxiliaries were composed, like the legion, of six thousand men, though consisting more largely of cavalry and being more lightly armed than the legionaries. “Their standing was parallel to that of native troops in our own Indian army or in the French army.” It was an under-

he says, "as a good soldier of Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 2³). And we see where he got the figure.

In Eph. 6 Paul names every arm of the soldier's equipment except the *pilum*, or javelin. "Taking up the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the evil one." The Romans carried a large oblong shield, about 4 feet long by 2½ feet across. Thucydides, in his description of the siege of Platæa, tells us that the defenders protected the face of their wooden palisades with raw hides against the fire arrows tipped with lighted tow which were shot at them. Octavius also when he attacked the fleet of Mark Antony used such "fiery darts" as those referred to by the Apostle.

Strong, heavy sandals, called *caligæ*, were worn by the soldiers. These shoes were studded with nails. The Emperor Caligula is said to have gained his name—a pet name given to him by the soldiers in his father's army—because as a boy he shared the life of the common soldiers and rejected the *calceus* or officer's shoe for the strong *caliga* of the private.

"The last portion of the armour to be put on was the helmet. Cæsar describes the enemy coming on so fast at one time that 'there was no time to put on the helmets,' these being hung over shoulder or breast while the men were marching. The rank and file carried their short swords attached to a *balteus* slung over the left shoulder and hanging on the right side. Having taken up the shield and donned his helmet,

the man would slip the balteus over his head and under his right arm." (Hitchcock.)

The Triumph.

The greatest event connected with the Roman army, and one of the grandest scenic displays in the ancient world, was the Triumph. When we read such words as, "Thanks be unto God, which always leadeth us in triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest through us the savour of his knowledge in every place" (2 Cor. 2¹⁴), we miss much of the significance which they had for the early Christians. To the Christians of the first century the word "triumph" called up a picture of the most thrilling spectacle of a lifetime.

The triumph was the great procession in which a victorious general entered the city of Rome. The starting-point of the procession was the Campus Martius outside the walls of the city, and from there it passed through the streets to the Capitol. At its head came the magistrates and senate, followed by trumpeters, and then by the spoils, and the victims for the sacrifice. Next came the prisoners who had been kept to grace the triumph, and, following them, the car of victory, in which rode the general, attired in robes of purple and gold, and holding in his right hand a laurel branch, and in his left an ivory sceptre crowned with the eagle. Incense filled the streets, sweet spices were thrown about or burnt, and the winds carried their perfumes abroad.

All these features are found in Paul's description of the Lord's triumph (Col. 2¹⁵). The forces of evil have failed to prevail against Him. More than that, He has triumphed over them like a glorious emperor, "exposing them to all the world and triumphing over them in the cross."

The following articles also bear upon Ephesians :

1⁵ Adoption, p. 275.

6⁵ Slavery in New Testament Times, p. 288.

Gentiles, p. 186.

Ephesus, p. 200.

COLOSSIANS.

THE CHURCHES OF THE LYCUS VALLEY.

Near the banks of the Lycus, a tributary of the Maeander and now called the Churuk-Su, lay three "Churches" which are mentioned in this Epistle—Colossæ, Laodicea, and Hierapolis. These cities lay close together, forming three points of a triangle, with Colossæ as the most easterly point, 10 or 12 miles distant from Laodicea and Hierapolis. These two cities face each other across the stream, 6 miles apart, and it would have been possible to visit all three in a single day.

Colossæ was no mean city in the days when Xerxes passed through it with his troops on his way to invade Greece. This is what Herodotus says about it : "Passing by a town of Phrygia called Anaua and a lake from

which they get salt, he came to Colossæ, a great city of Phrygia, where the river Lycus tumbling into a chasm in the ground disappears, and then at an interval of some 5 furlongs reappears and discharges itself into the Maeander." And Xenophon, some eighty years later, speaks of it as great and prosperous. But at the date of the Epistle Colossæ was the smallest of the three towns, and had declined into comparative insignificance. Lightfoot says that "it was without doubt the least important Church to which any Epistle of St. Paul was addressed."

Laodicea had risen to great importance under the Romans, who made it the political capital of the surrounding district. "It was easily fortified, and commanded the only pass into Phrygia. On the road which led through the city, constantly there passed caravans of camels and horses, troops of soldiers, and the wealth of the nations, so that in Roman times Laodicea became a great banking city, famous for its rich men, famous for its glossy black wool, which was woven into garments and sent to all parts of the world, famous, too, for its school of medicine, which made a specialty of a certain mineral powder that was supposed to be good for sore eyes.

"Thus we can understand the allusions in the third chapter of the Revelation, where the Spirit counsels the church to 'buy gold . . . tried in the fire,' the true gold of the Spirit and not the gold which constituted the prosperity of Laodicea; 'and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed,' instead of the

glossy black wool for which the city was famous ; ‘ and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see ’ —see the spiritual realities instead of regaining merely the physical sight, which the famous eye ointment of Laodicea was supposed to restore.”¹

Hierapolis, the “ holy City,” on the right bank of the Lycus, was famous for its hot springs, whose medicinal properties made the city a favourite health resort. The alum with which the water is impregnated quickly precipitates, and the rocks over which it flows have the appearance of a “ marble Niagara.” This explains the name of the modern village, Pambuk-Kalesi (Cotton Castle). There was a shrine of Cybele in Hierapolis, and another sacred attribute of the place was the Plutonium, or “ entrance to Hades,” a hole in the ground, about the circumference of a man’s body, from which poisonous fumes issued. A difficult city, so strongly entrenched in heathen superstition, to win for Christianity.

How did the gospel come to the towns of the Lycus Valley ? Not by the Apostle directly. The Christian communities there had not seen his face in the flesh. The Colossians probably received the new teaching from their fellow-townsmen Epaphras ; and Timothy appears to have been associated with him. The nearness of the three towns would mean that the gospel would spread rapidly from the one to the other. From Rome Paul sent a letter to the Christian community by the hand of Tychicus, in which he dealt with what is known

¹ F. E. Clark, in *Record of Christian Work*, December 1912.

as the "Colossian heresy," a type of false teaching whose main features seem to have been asceticism and worship of angels.

PHILEMON.

SLAVERY IN NEW TESTAMENT TIMES.

In our Lord's day there were comparatively few slaves in Palestine, and they were mostly to be found in the great houses of the foreign officials. Among the Jews themselves the slaves had numerous privileges which made their lot immeasurably superior to that of their class elsewhere, and our Lord seems to have come very little in contact with slavery, at least in its most repulsive forms, though He refers to the punishment of slaves in Mt. 25³⁰ and Lk. 12⁴⁶.

But things were far different in the world outside Palestine. In the Greek and Roman world the slaves formed the bulk of the population, and the danger they were to the State increased the severity of their treatment. Incessant warfare flooded the slave-markets of Rome—for all prisoners were enslaved as a matter of course—and it was not uncommon for a wealthy Roman, with his country estates and town houses, to possess some thousands of slaves, the majority of whom would be field labourers. Two hundred was a usual number; and to have fewer than ten was to surrender all claim to social position. Large numbers of slaves were kept for merely ostentatious display,

and performed ridiculously trivial duties, such as "acting as clocks to announce the hours." According to Dollinger, there were atrienses for the hall, cubicularii for the sleeping-rooms, secretarii for letters, lectors, introducers, nomenclators, stewards, bath attendants, cooks, tasters, letter-bearers, grooms, and so on through a complexity of offices. Many of them never saw their master at all and knew little about him, and he knew still less about them. The system was both demoralizing and enervating to the character of the slave-owners, and tended to render them heartless and brutal in their treatment.

In the eye of the law slaves were not "persons" but "things." They were their master's property, to be disposed of in any way he chose. They were bought and sold like cattle, exposed in the market-place to be inspected and handled by intending purchasers, and named as dogs or horses might be—Onesimus, "Profitable," Chresimus, "Useful," Symphorus, "Suitable," Epictetus, "Acquired." (David Smith.) They were entirely at the mercy of their owner, and for the slightest offences might be scourged or tortured or done to death in a thousand dreadful ways. In the reign of Augustus, a certain Vedius Pollio, a friend of the Emperor's, used to have offending slaves thrown into his fish-pool to feed his huge electric eels (*murænæ*). At this same period a law was enacted by which, if a slave killed his master, not only he, but every slave under the same roof, was put to death. In the year 61, when Paul himself was probably in Rome, a senator, Pedanius Secundus,

was murdered by one of his slaves, and the law ordained that all the slaves, to the number of four hundred, must pay the extreme penalty. So, in spite of popular disapproval, these four hundred slaves were put to death.

In the country the slaves who worked in the fields were chained by the foot and penned up at night in an underground room. Their fate was terrible if they attempted to escape. The tracking and recapture of slaves formed the occupation of a special class of persons known as the "fugitivarii." Recovered slaves were branded on the forehead with the letter F, and the sum of their ill-treatment and labour was increased. It is no wonder, then, that slaves took summary vengeance on their master when opportunity came, and that there arose the popular saying, "So many slaves so many enemies."

But it would be unjust to leave this as the only picture. Instances are not wanting of kindly relations between master and slave, and the lot of the superior class of slaves was not always a harsh one. Few letters show more genuine feeling than this from a female slave to her sick master. It belongs to the second century.

"Tays to the lord Apollonius, many greetings. Above all I greet you master, and am praying always for your health. I was distressed, lord, in no small measure, to hear that you were sick; but thanks be to all the gods that they are keeping you from all harm. I beseech you, lord, if you think it right, to send to us,

if not, we die because we do not see you daily (cf. 1 Cor. 15³¹). Would that we could fly and come and pay our reverence to you. For we are distressed. . . . Wherefore be reconciled to us and send to us. Good-bye, lord. . . . All is going well with us.”¹

Manumission also was of frequent occurrence. One of the chief ways in which a slave was enabled to obtain his freedom was by the rite of fictitious purchase on the part of some divinity. The slave first paid his purchase-money—the money which he had saved—into the treasury of the temple; then owner and slave went up together to the temple and the latter was supposed to be sold to the god, the purchase-money being handed over to the master. The slave thus became technically the property of the god, but to all intents and purposes he was now completely free. A document was drawn up narrating the facts and took this general form:

“Date. ‘N. N. sold to the Pythian Apollo a male slave named X. Y. at a price of — minæ, for freedom (or, on condition that he shall be free, etc.).’ Then follow any special arrangements and the names of the witnesses.”²

“St. Paul,” says Professor Deissmann, “is alluding to the custom referred to in these records when he speaks of our being made free by Christ. By nature we are *slaves* of sin; the Jew is furthermore a *slave* of the law, the heathen a *slave* of his gods. We become

¹ G. Milligan, *Here and There among the Papyri*, p. 98.

² A. Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East*, p. 327 ff.

free men by the fact that Christ *buys* us. And He has done so :

‘Ye were bought with a price,’

says St. Paul in two places, using the very formula of the records, ‘with a price.’ Again :

‘For freedom did Christ set us free [Gal. 5¹] . . .

ye were called for freedom ’ [Gal. 5¹³].

in these words of St. Paul we have literally the other formula of the records.

“Numerous manumissions expressly forbid, sometimes under heavy penalties, that the enfranchised shall ever ‘*be made a slave*’ again. We now see how wicked is the intention of those

‘who . . . spy out our liberty, which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage ’ [Gal. 2⁴].

And we understand warnings like this in the letters :

‘For freedom did Christ set us free : stand fast therefore, and be not entangled again in a yoke of bondage ’ [Gal. 5¹],

and the still more moving exhortation :

‘Ye were bought with a price, become not slaves of men ’ [1 Cor. 7²³].

Christians cannot become slaves of men, because they have become ‘slaves of Christ’ by purchase, and have entered into the ‘slavery of God’ or ‘of righteousness.’ But, as in every other case of purchase by a god, the slave of Christ is at the same time free : he is ‘the Lord’s (*i.e.* Christ’s) freedman,’ even when he is outwardly the slave of a human lord.”

In his letter to Philemon Paul does not ask that Onesimus be set free. Sin, in his eyes, was the only slavery, and the spiritual emancipation of the Phrygian slave was something infinitely greater than any change in his social condition. He knew that the runaway would be treated not as a slave but as a brother, and that was everything—for slave and master and Apostle.

PHILIPPIANS.

THE CHURCH AT PHILIPPI.

The first city in Europe to receive the gospel message was Macedonian Philippi, situated about 8 miles inland from the port of Neapolis, the modern Kavalla. The original name of the city was Krenides, "The Springs," but when Philip of Macedon conquered it, and made a fortress city of it, he renamed it Philippi. Close at hand stood Mt. Pangæus, famous for its gold mines—"the 'Rand' of the ancient world"—yielding, it is said, a yearly output of a thousand talents, and providing Philip with the wealth which he used for the equipment of his naval and military forces. "The gold of Krenides," says Heuzey, "spread itself over Greece, preceding the phalanx like an advance-guard, and opening more gates than the battering-rams and catapults." In 168 B.C. Philippi, with the rest of Macedonia, passed into the power of the Romans. It became a Roman colony in 42 B.C., when Octavian and Antony defeated the republican forces under Brutus

and Cassius, and settled a number of their veterans there.

The ruins of the ancient city, which are still to be seen on the Drama-Kavalla road, show that it was of considerable extent, and was divided by the Via Egnatia into two parts, a higher and a lower city. On the slopes of the hill stood the citadel and the temple of Silvanus, while on the level ground were situated the theatre, the forum, the market-place, the great Roman baths, the shops and warehouses, and no doubt the mining settlement.

There were apparently few Jews in Philippi, and when Paul with his three companions, Silas, Timothy, and Luke, entered the city they found no synagogue there. There was, however, a *proseucha*, an enclosure or garden, by the banks of the river Gangites, where the Jews were in the habit of meeting on the Sabbath for prayer; and there, "beside still waters and green pastures," the Apostle made his first convert, the proselyte Lydia, a purple-seller from Thyatira.

Another convert was a slave girl, a ventriloquist, who possessed the spirit of divination, and whose reputation as a fortune-teller brought considerable profits to the company who managed her. This girl had formed the habit of intercepting the missionaries on their way to the *proseucha* and following them with the cry, "These men are the slaves of the Most High God which announce to you the way of salvation." Her words had a different meaning to those who heard her from that which they convey to us. "The Most

High God " was a common pagan expression applied to various gods, and the "way of salvation " meant no more than good fortune—a safe voyage across the *Ægean*, a rich find in the goldfields, recovery from sickness, deliverance from dangers of the road. The Apostle was forced at last to command the spirit to go out of her. The girl returned to her right mind, but at the same time lost her powers of ventriloquism, and with the passing of this gift her hold on the superstitions of the people also vanished. The loss of this profitable source of income so enraged the girl's masters that they proceeded to accuse the missionaries before the Roman officials of interfering with lawful business, and had them thrown into prison. From this danger the Apostles were delivered by an earthquake, and another convert was added in the person of the jailer. The magistrates, learning that they had scourged and imprisoned Roman citizens, were in haste to make amends and, setting the missionaries free, begged them to depart from the city. This they did, after a farewell meeting with the brethren in the house of Lydia. Luke may have remained at Philippi to consolidate the work there ; the others set out on the road to Thessalonica.

The Apostle was a prisoner in Rome when he wrote his letter to the Philippians. They had sent Epaphroditus to him in his prison with a gift of money and a letter of affectionate sympathy. Unfortunately Epaphroditus fell sick, and was for some time seriously ill in Rome, and when at length he recovered, it was

decided that he ought to return to Philippi. Paul took the opportunity of sending a letter to the Church which was so near to his heart and had ministered to him so generously in the past, in which he thanked them for their latest gift and reassured them with regard to his personal situation and the progress of the gospel in Rome. This is the happiest of all the Apostle's letters to the churches, "an Epistle of the heart, a true love-letter, full of friendship, gratitude and confidence."

NOTES.

- ¹¹³ "*Throughout the whole prætorian guard.*"—This was the Imperial Body-guard, originally organized by Augustus; it consisted of 10,000 picked men. Tiberius concentrated this body in Rome in a strongly fortified camp. Later Vitellius increased the number to 16,000. They received special privileges, double pay, and a substantial bounty on retiring at the end of their period of service. Paul was placed under the charge of these troops, who relieved each other in their guard over him in his private lodging; and during the two years that he was in the custody of the guard he must have come into contact with most of its members.
- ⁴²² "*They that are of Cæsar's household.*"—This covers the whole of the Imperial establishment, from high officials down to slaves. The monumental inscriptions relating to the servants and dependants of the emperors show that they kept up an enormous establishment with the most minute subdivision of offices. "When we find several distinct functions in the single department of the wardrobe or the plate chest, when even the 'tasters' form a separate class of servants under their own chief, the multitude and multiplicity thus exhibited forbid us to speculate on the exact office or rank which may have been held by these friends of St. Paul." (Lightfoot.) It is probable that Christianity had entered "Cæsar's household" before

Paul came to Rome, and that those members who sent their salutations to Philippi were known to the Church there.

The following articles also bear upon Philippians :

1⁸⁻¹⁰ The Day of the Lord, p. 233.

3⁵ The Rite of Circumcision, vol. 1. p. 191.

3¹²⁻¹⁶ The Greek Games, p. 306.
Macedonia, p. 191.

I TIMOTHY.

CHURCH ORGANIZATION AND MINISTRY.

The letters to Timothy and Titus are commonly known as the Pastoral Epistles, a title which sufficiently indicates their character, for they are largely concerned with the duties and responsibilities of a pastor, and are addressed to two of Paul's younger colleagues in the ministry for their encouragement and guidance. But while they are intended, in the first instance, for ministers, these Epistles also deal with the practical affairs of the Church, with matters of organization, ministry, discipline, and worship. The features of Church life and order which they reveal are essentially the same as in the other Epistles and in the Acts of the Apostles, although they are worked out in greater detail. There is as yet no fully developed system of government. The Church is still in the making, in those days of vigorous growth and development towards the close of the Apostolic Age. If we combine what is given in the earlier Epistles with what

we find in the Pastorals we can form a fairly clear conception of the organization and ministry of the early Church in the first century.

Two kinds of ministry seem to have been present in the Church almost from the beginning—a *general ministry* and a *local ministry*. The one was a ministry to the whole Church, moving about from place to place, proclaiming and teaching the gospel and exercising general authority and supervision over all the churches; the other was a ministry within a local church, which, along with the assembly of the congregation, undertook the guidance of its affairs and fulfilled the ordinary functions of church life.

To the general and at first “higher” ministry apostles, prophets, teachers, and evangelists belonged. In 1 Cor. 12²² and Eph. 4¹¹ Paul gives two lists of the chief persons of the Church. “God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers,” followed by special gifts, “powers, gifts of healings, helps, governments, divers kinds of tongues.” And again, “He gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers.” The first place in both lists is given to the apostles.

“The word ‘apostle’ means simply one ‘sent forth’; that is, a missionary. Thus it is explicitly said of the Twelve that Christ appointed them ‘that they might be with Him, and that He might *send them forth* to preach’ (Mk. 6¹⁴); wherefore ‘He named them apostles’ (Lk. 6¹³). In Heb. 3¹, Christ Himself is

spoken of as an 'apostle,' that is to say, commissioned by God His Father. The term was employed in the Greek Bible in 1 Kings 14⁶, where 'I am sent to thee with heavy tidings' was translated 'I am a cruel messenger (*apostile*) unto thee'; and it is said that the emissaries of the Jewish Council at Jerusalem, who collected the temple-tribute outside the borders of Palestine, were so called. In the New Testament the term is applied similarly to any person delegated by a Church to be its representative in visiting other cities or Churches, as in the case of the delegates who bore the gifts from Greece and Macedonia to Jerusalem (2 Cor. 8²³ marg.). In a restricted sense it is used to denote those Christians who, in answer to God's call, had devoted themselves to the task of spreading the gospel among those who had never heard it. Thus, in Acts 13¹, Barnabas and Saul are either 'prophets' or 'teachers'; but when the Holy Spirit spoke, apparently through the lips of a prophet, ordaining that they should be 'separated for the work whereunto He had called them,' the Church at Antioch, acting, no doubt, through its leading men, 'laid their hands on them, and sent them away,' and on that same journey they are styled 'apostles' (Acts 14⁴⁻¹⁴). Yet Paul most earnestly averred that his commission as an apostle was direct from God, who had bidden him to be sent forth—'not from men, neither through man' (Gal. 1¹), so that he obviously did not regard the laying-on of hands at Antioch as being more than the Church's solemn recognition of a preceding vocation. How

relatively numerous 'apostles' were in the Apostolic Age is shown by the references to 'false apostles' in 2 Cor. 11¹³ and Rev. 2²; the reason why certain who 'call themselves apostles' are not such, is not that they claim a position which is reserved for the original Twelve, but that they do not show forth 'the signs of an apostle' (2 Cor. 12¹²) in holiness of life, enduring of hardship, and the doing of mighty works; nor have they 'the seal of their apostleship' (1 Cor. 9²) in actual conversions."¹

After the apostle comes the prophet. He, too, received his commission direct from God, and by his gift of inspiration—the highest gift of all (1 Cor. 14³⁹)—was associated with the apostle in the spiritual leadership of the Church. The prophet was not primarily a man who predicted the future; he was not so much a "foreteller" as a "forthteller," speaking the mind of God. He might, and often did, move about from place to place, from church to church, like Agabus (Acts 21¹⁰), but, in general, prophets were attached to some particular community in which they exercised their gift, taking the lead in worship and "speaking unto men edification and comfort and consolation" (1 Cor. 14³). Prophecy was not confined to men. Women also might prophesy, like Philip the Evangelist's daughters at Cæsarea (Acts 21⁹). Towards the close of the century prophecy was falling into disrepute and false prophets were numerous (cf. 1 Jn. 4¹⁻³, 2 Pet. 2¹, Jude). The prophet must give evidence then that his gift is genuine,

¹ E. E. Genner, *The Church in the New Testament*, p. 72 ff.

and the unfailing test is his own life and conduct. "Not every one that speaketh in the spirit is a prophet, but only if he have the behaviour of the Lord. By their behaviour then shall the false prophet and the prophet be known. . . . Every prophet that teacheth the truth if he doeth not what he teacheth is a false prophet." ¹

The "teachers" were apparently catechists who taught the converts the main facts of the gospel history, and instructed them in the articles of the Christian faith. As regards the "evangelists," the name itself conveys the only knowledge we have of their work; they were "proclaimers of the good news" to the heathen. Philip, one of the Seven, is called an evangelist, and we read of him that he went forth from Jerusalem and preached the gospel in Samaria, in the desert, and in all the cities of the coast land between Azotus and Cæsarea. The higher functions did not exclude those of evangelist and teacher. Paul was himself "the prince of evangelists and the greatest of Christian teachers."

Along with this ministry of the Word we can trace the development of a local ministry consisting of those whose gifts lay rather in the direction of administration than of teaching, and who therefore undertook the practical side of church life, the care of the services, provision of a meeting-place, control of the finances, and other business arrangements of the community.

To this *local ministry* "elders" or "presbyters" and

¹ *The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, chap. xi.

“deacons” belonged. These would be included in the class referred to by Paul under the title of “helps and governments.”

The title “elder,” in the sense of ruler, was common to many nations. It was familiar to the Jews from earliest times, and in the New Testament period the elders were the ruling body in the synagogue. The Romans also had their Senate of “seniores” or “elders,” and the Greeks had their Council of “gerontes” (aged men). In Egypt “elder” was an official name, and there is record of a religious Assembly whose members (twenty-five in number) were called “presbyters.” It was natural, then, that the Christian communities should adopt a similar organization. Thus we read that at the close of the first missionary journey Paul and Barnabas appointed “elders in every church” and made them responsible for the guidance of its affairs. As we also find elders at Jerusalem and at Ephesus we may infer that the Churches generally had elders.

It appears probable that “elders” and “bishops” are two different titles for the same persons, and that the latter term describes their function as taking oversight. Thus Paul sends for the “elders” of the congregation at Ephesus, and charges them to “take heed to all the flock in the which the Holy Ghost hath made you bishops (overseers)” (Acts 20²⁸). These local officials watched over the lives and conduct of the members of the Church, administered the finances, looked after the poor and strangers and visited the sick,

and in the absence of members of the "higher" ministry presided at public worship.

The word "deacon" means "minister" or "servant," and is used throughout the New Testament in the general sense of one who is engaged in Christian service. As the title of an official class it appears only in 1 Tim. 3 and in Phil. 1¹. The deacons performed the subordinate services of the congregation. Their special function was to distribute alms to the poor and needy, and the qualities required in them were that they should be "grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre"—which might well be a temptation to one who had control of the funds for distribution—"holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience" (1 Tim. 3⁸⁻⁹).

The later history of these offices does not concern us here. The development of the "episcopate" and the complete separation of the clergy from the laity lie outside the Apostolic Age.

The following articles also bear upon 1 Timothy :

6¹ Slavery in New Testament Times, p. 288.

The Position of Women in the East, p. 92.

The Church Meetings, p. 258.

TITUS.

THE ISLAND OF CRETE.

Crete, which is, after Sicily and Sardinia, the largest island of the Mediterranean, lies altogether off the main line of traffic, and the ships going east and west seldom

catch even a distant glimpse of its snow-clad peaks. But the merchants of the ancient world, sailing the Mediterranean, never failed to put in at its ports, for Crete was the half-way house between Asia on the east, Egypt on the south, and mainland-Greece on the north, and was favourably situated to trade with all the world.

The island is about 160 miles long and from 7 to 30 broad, and the greater part of its area is occupied by mountain ranges, with the ancient Mt. Ida, now called Psiloriti, in the centre, rising to a height of over 8000 feet. Its valleys are fertile and the climate delightful, mild enough even in winter for portable braziers to be sufficient for heating purposes. The northern coast-line is much indented and affords good natural harbours; but the south coast is less broken, the mountains in many parts rising like a wall from the sea. The ship in which Paul sailed on his voyage to Rome was driven by stress of weather to seek the shelter of the southern coast, and after skirting Cape Salmone, north-east of Crete, reached the small bay of Fair Havens, the modern Kali Liménes, immediately to the east of Cape Matala. Afterwards, in an attempt to reach the better harbour of Phoenix—which is identified with Loutro, 40 miles farther west—she rounded Cape Matala and there met the full force of a north-easterly gale which drove her out to sea for 23 miles until she was fortunate enough to get under the lee of Cauda.

The greatness of Crete is prehistoric and centres round the name of Minos, King of Cnossus, who is represented as the ideal ruler and lawgiver of antiquity,

and the first monarch to establish a naval power and obtain what the Greeks called the Thalassocracy, or dominion of the sea. About the beginning of the fourteenth century B.C., disaster befell this great sea-power, probably through a combination of the mainland cities against it. The date is of special interest to the student of Old Testament history because it marks the coming of the Philistines to Palestine. And the principal element of the Philistine confederation was composed of Cretans driven by the disaster from their island home. The island was later colonized by Dorians, and its civilization was gradually assimilated to the Hellenic type. In 67 B.C. the island was annexed by Rome.

According to the ancients "the three worst C's were the Cretans, the Cappadocians, and the Cilicians." The Cretans bore an evil reputation as a turbulent and lawless race, avaricious, given to lying and drunkenness. "Cretizing" was a synonym for "lying," and to "out-Cretan a Cretan" was to "outwit a knave." In his Epistle to Titus Paul quotes a hexameter of a native of the island, the poet Epimenides (600 B.C.), to the effect that the Cretans are "always liars, evil beasts, idle gluttons." The character of the Cretans as "always liars" may have been a hit at the magnificence of their legends and traditions. Professor Rendel Harris declares that Epimenides had a particular lie of the Cretans in his mind. "It is," he says, "the statement that Zeus was buried in Crete. That Zeus should have been born in Crete was not thought to be an impiety,

but that he should have been dead and buried, that was blasphemy."

The dress of the Cretan has changed but little with the passing of the centuries. The men still wear strong top-boots and a short cloak, and the kilt of the Minoan Age has its modern counterpart. Paintings on the palace walls at Cnossus represent the women in garments that have a very modern appearance—slim-waisted and low-necked. The tight-fitting bodice with short sleeves and open neck is very similar to that of the modern peasant bodice.

It is not known when, or by whom, Christianity was brought to Crete. There were many Jews on the island, and some of them were present in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost, and may well have been among the three thousand converts (Acts 2¹¹. 4¹). The only recorded visit of the Apostle to Crete is that as a prisoner on his way from Jerusalem to Rome, and it is not probable that he was able to do any evangelizing work there at that time. The position of Titus in Crete is that of a representative of the Apostle holding a local commission and with authority to organize the Church there.

2 TIMOTHY.

THE GREEK GAMES.

Athletic games, races, and contests of other kinds held a very important place in the social life of the Greeks. The four chief games—the Olympic, the

Isthmian, the Pythian, and the Nemean—were great national festivals, to which crowds came from all parts; whilst many cities throughout Greece and her colonies had their own special games.

The Olympic games, which were held every four years, were the most important. They were celebrated in the plain of Elis in honour of Olympian Zeus, and the contests included running, wrestling, boxing, chariot races, and other competitions for both youths and men. The judges were selected by lot, one for each tribe of the Eleians, and for a period of ten months prior to the contest they received instruction in their duties. The athletes themselves had to spend a similar period in training, the last thirty days of which were conducted under the supervision of the judges. All competitors had to prove that they were of pure Hellenic descent, and that they had not been convicted of any civil crime or act of impiety, and also that they had undergone the required training. It is to the last that Paul refers when he says, "If a man contend in the games, he is not crowned, except he have contended lawfully" (2 Tim. 2⁵).

The foot-race took place in the stadium, an oblong area open at one end and semicircular at the other, with raised tiers of seats for the spectators along the sides. The runners stripped themselves of their clothing and anointed their bodies with oil. Then a herald proclaimed, "Let the runners put their feet to the line," and the race was started by the note of the trumpet. "The judge was stationed at the goal, which was clearly

visible from one end of the stadium to the other so that the runner could make straight for it."

For victory in any contest the prize was no more than a crown of leaves, at Olympia of wild olive, and at Corinth, in Paul's time, of pine leaves. But this fading garland was the most coveted prize in the land. It conferred honour on the victor, on his family, and on his town. He entered his native city in triumphal procession. We even read of the walls being broken through to make a new entrance for him. Many privileges and immunities were granted to him, and if he was an Athenian he received a money gift of 500 drachmæ. Poets sang his praises, and his statue might be placed in the sacred grove of Elis, and even altars built to him.

The Apostle's allusions to the Greek Games are beautiful and suggestive. In his Epistle to the Ephesians he speaks of "wrestling not against flesh and blood" but against spiritual powers (6¹²), and there is probably a reference to boxing in 4²⁷, where "giving place" means giving vantage-ground to the great Enemy. And again, in 1 Cor. 9²⁶, "So fight I, as not beating the air."

But generally it is to the foot-race, the most important of all the athletic contests, that he refers. In Phil. 3¹²⁻¹⁶ Paul gives a vivid picture of the intense eagerness of the runner, concentrating his whole energy on the race, thinking only of the goal, stretching forward with bent body, pressing on. He contrasts the enduring reward of the Christian life with the perishableness

of the crown of olive or pine given to the victor in the race. "They do it to receive a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible" (1 Cor. 9²⁵)—the "crown of righteousness," given by the Lord, the righteous Judge (2 Tim. 4⁸).

In Heb. 12¹⁻² there is a striking allusion to the athletic contests. "We are compassed about," says the writer, with "a cloud of witnesses"—those who have given witness to the reality of the life for which they lived and died, and whose past achievements are an encouragement to the Christian. The Christian therefore must lay aside every weight (as the runner divests himself of his garments, and as he has already by hard training got rid of all superfluous flesh), and look away from everything that would distract, unto Jesus, "who has run the same course and now sits visible on His throne at the goal."

HEBREWS.

THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

THE view which now commends itself to the majority of scholars is that the Epistle to the Hebrews was addressed to Rome, and, probably, to a small "house-church," such as those mentioned in the closing chapter of Romans. Who its writer was we do not know. He does not give his name (as it was customary to do at the beginning of a letter). Nor does he say enough about himself to enable us to identify him. As a consequence many names have been suggested—Silas, Luke, Barnabas, Apollos, Aquila, even Peter and Philip the Deacon—but none of them has found general favour. One of the most interesting of recent conjectures is that the writer was Priscilla; but the strongest argument in its favour, as it has been humorously said, is the 22nd verse of the last chapter: "I have written unto you in few words." Only a woman could have said that after writing a letter of thirteen chapters. All that we can gather from the Epistle itself is that the writer was a person of culture and genius, holding a position of authority in the Church to which the letter was addressed, and a friend of Timothy.

The writer speaks of his readers as belonging to the second generation, and seems to suggest that some con-

siderable time has elapsed since the Church was first established. The persecution of the Church by Nero probably lies well in the past, and its memory is no longer fresh in men's minds. But if there has been no great persecution, the Christians have all along been exposed to suffering and loss, and while these trials have served to draw them closer in sympathy and mutual helpfulness, they have also had the effect of depressing and discouraging the struggling Church. There are those who have already become apostate, and others are faltering in their faith and inclined to fall away.

But persecution and apostasy are not the only dangers that threaten the Church. "Some of its members are Christians of some years' standing, old enough to be teachers, but actually immature (5¹²). These persons need to be aroused to press on unto perfection (6¹). The readers have indeed shown Christian graces in practical ways, ministering to the saints and the like; it would seem to be in other matters that their failure lies (6¹⁰). The fact seems to be that the writer is apprehensive that his readers, or some of them, will fall into indifference as to Christian faith, not because of stress of persecution, but through the lapse of time, and the wearing out of their first enthusiasm. A sense of disappointment at the failure of the promises to reach fulfilment, too, is reflected in the writer's picture of the old worthies who died in faith, without having received the promises (11¹. 13. 39). The peril of indifference would grow more and more serious as time went on, and the last individuals of Jesus' own genera-

tion disappeared, without His coming again in the glorious manner so keenly anticipated through the first years of the life of the Church. For these and other reasons, sluggishness and indifference were creeping into the Church, and a stirring declaration of the folly and the peril of such decline was urgently demanded.”¹

Whether the readers to whom the Epistle was sent were Jewish Christians, according to the traditional view, or Gentile Christians, as certain modern scholars hold, they are equally exhorted to a firmer Christian stand. The writer’s purpose is to inspire them with new courage and endurance, to renew their former faith and zeal, and to warn them against the perils of backsliding and apostasy. With this end in view he takes as his theme the perfect and final character of the revelation made in Christ.

From chapter 1 to chapter 10¹⁸ we have a continuous demonstration of the supremacy of Christ. The writer shows that Christ is greater (1) than the prophets, by whom God spoke in days past; (2) than the angels, through whom, according to Jewish tradition, the Law was given on Sinai; (3) than Moses, who established the Old Covenant; (4) than Aaron and his successors. Christ is the ideal High Priest, of the type of Melchizedek, whose priesthood is universal and eternal, and whose sacrifice offered once for all is of abiding efficacy.

The following articles also bear upon Hebrews :

The Persecution of the Christians, p. 331.

12¹⁻³ The Greek Games, p. 306.

¹ E. J. Goodspeed, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, p. 18.

THE CATHOLIC EPISTLES.

JAMES.

THE seven minor Epistles, which bear the names of James, Peter, John, and Jude, have from early times been known as "Catholic Epistles," probably because they are not addressed to particular communities, as Paul's letters are, but are letters for general circulation. The first of this group is the Epistle which claims to be written by "James, a servant of God, and of the Lord Jesus Christ." If this means that the author is one of the "Jacobs" of the New Testament, he must almost certainly be James, the Lord's brother. James, the son of Zebedee, was killed by Herod Agrippa at the Passover of the year 44, and seems to be excluded by his early death. Of James, the son of Alphæus, we know practically nothing at all, and there is no reason for ascribing the Epistle to him. There was only one James who was sufficiently eminent to be known by the name without some added description, and that was the brother of the Lord who became the "bishop" of Jerusalem.

Like the rest of the Lord's brethren, James did not believe in the claims of Jesus while He was on the earth, but became a disciple after the Resurrection. Speaking

of the risen Lord, Paul writes (1 Cor. 15⁷), "Then he appeared to James ; then to all the apostles " ; and James may have dated his conversion from that hour. He was at once received among the number of believers, and within a few years he had attained the highest position in the Church of Jerusalem.

Eusebius, quoting from Hegesippus, tells us that James was called " the Just " on account of his rigorous observance of the Law, that he lived as a Nazirite, abstaining from strong drink and animal food. " To him alone was it permitted to enter the holy place, for his clothing was of linen, not of wool. Alone he used to go into the temple, and would be found upon his knees praying for the remission of his people's sins, so that his knees became hard like those of a camel through continuously bending them in the worship of God." Of his death Eusebius relates that the scribes and Pharisees cast him down from the pinnacle of the Temple, and then stoned him, since he was not killed by the fall. " Then he turned and knelt, saying, ' I beseech thee, Lord God, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.' Then one of the priests of the sons of Rechab cried, saying, ' Cease, what are ye doing ? the Just One prayeth for us ! ' And then one of them, a fuller, took the club with which he beat the clothes and smote the Just One on the head. And in that manner did James suffer martyrdom."

It is impossible to read this Epistle without being constantly reminded of the sayings of Jesus, and especially of the Sermon on the Mount (cf. 1⁵ with Mt. 7⁷ ;

3¹² with Mt. 7¹⁶ ; 5^{2. 3} with Matt. 6¹⁹ ; 5¹² with Mt. 5³⁴). The words are not identical, it is true, but they reproduce the characteristic modes of thought and expression of our Lord, and in other instances there are echoes of what may be unrecorded sayings of Christ. Professor Currie Martin has put forward the interesting suggestion that James may have made a collection of these sayings and extended them into homilies, and that after his death some of his disciples collected them and put them into their present form. Professor Moulton adds the further suggestion that this Epistle was intended not for Christians but for *unconverted Jews*. This would explain why it has so little to say of the Person and Work of our Lord. The writer may have felt that his appeal would lose its effect by referring to Jesus and the offence of the Cross. But he brought in many of Jesus' sayings in the hope that his readers might feel their beauty and power, and be led through them to a fuller knowledge of the Christ.

1 AND 2 PETER.

Even without its superscription and the constant tradition of the Church affirming its authorship, we should almost feel warranted in saying that no one but Peter could have written the first Epistle which bears his name. It breathes Peter's spirit of "deep conviction and urgency of action," and both in its ideas and mode of expression it continually reminds us of the speeches and sermons of the Apostle recorded in the

Acts. There are many references to the sufferings of Christ and to the last days of His earthly life, and they are such as we should expect from one who had been very close to the Master. Here is a particularly striking one. "Gird yourselves with humility," says Peter, "to serve one another" (5⁵). His thoughts have gone back to that scene in the upper room which John records for us: "Jesus riseth from supper, and layeth aside his garments; and he took a towel, and girded himself, . . . and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. So he cometh to Simon Peter" (Jn. 13⁴⁻⁶).

"Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the elect who are sojourners of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia." The Epistle is a circular letter intended for the Churches scattered over a vast district, and a glance at the map will show that the order in which the provinces are named indicates that Silas, the bearer of the letter, would land at some port in Pontus, probably at Sinope, and journey south through Galatia to Cappadocia, then turn west to Asia, and finally come north again to Bithynia.

First Peter was written from Rome, and its purpose was to comfort and encourage the Christians of Asia Minor at a time of severe distress and rising persecution. That Rome was the scene of the close of the Apostle's ministry and of his martyrdom is generally admitted, and the name "Babylon" is used here, as in the Book of Revelation, to signify Rome. Writing to the Corinthians, Clement of Rome sets before his readers

the example of "Peter who through envy endured, not one or two, but numerous labours, and so, having borne witness, went to the place that was his due." Origen tells us that by his own request Peter was crucified with his head downwards, because he counted himself not worthy to suffer in the same way as his Master. And there is a well-known and picturesque legend attributed to St. Ambrose, which recounts that Peter yielded to the persuasion of his friends and sought to escape from Rome. As he hastened along the Appian Way Jesus met him. Instantly recognizing Him, Peter asked, "Lord, whither goest thou?" "I go to Rome, there to be crucified once more," was the reply. Peter understood, and went back into the city to lay down his life for his Lord.

Second Peter also claims to be from the hand of the Apostle, but it is so different in style and tone and in its contents that most scholars consider that it was written by a Christian teacher in the early part of the second century, and attributed to Peter in accordance with the literary practice of the day. The Epistle comes out of a time when Christians were greatly troubled about the Second Advent. "Where," mockers were asking, "is the promise of His Coming? The 'fathers' of the Church have already passed away and yet all things remain as they have been from the beginning." The writer of the Epistle meets this scepticism with the confident assurance that the day of the Lord will certainly come, and come suddenly, and with His return old things will pass away and all things become new.

1, 2, AND 3 JOHN.

These three Epistles, two of them no more than notes, are all anonymous, but the Church has always believed that they were written by John, the son of Zebedee, "the disciple whom Jesus loved." According to tradition John spent the closing years of his life at Ephesus, surviving till the reign of Trajan, A.D. 98-117, and it was probably in that city that the letters were written.

The false teaching against which the Apostle sought to safeguard his readers was apparently some form of *Gnosticism*, so called because its adherents laid great stress on the importance of *gnosis*, or knowledge, setting it against faith, and claiming that salvation was by knowledge and not by faith. Moreover this salvation could be achieved only by the initiated few. The Gospel of Jesus Christ came offering its blessings to all, but the Gnostic confined his teaching to the spiritual elect.

The main principle of Gnosticism was a belief that matter was the source of all evil, and was essentially evil. This led its upholders (1) to deny that God created the world, (2) to reject the Incarnation, (3) to interpose a series of angelic beings between the perfect God and imperfect man. Our Lord's body, they said, was not a real body, but only a phantasm (*dokētēs*); and it was this denial of the reality of the body of Christ that gave the name of "Docetics" to these early heretics. When we read the Apostle's solemn warning against teaching

which denies "that Jesus is the Christ" or "that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh," we can see quite plainly that he has in his mind these Docetic teachings which were subverting the whole Christian faith.

The third brief letter is written to commend Gaius for his hospitality and to warn him against a certain Diotrephes (his name suggests an aristocratic origin), who was refusing to admit travelling teachers, and attempting to hinder those who would entertain them.

JUDE.

This Epistle opens with the words, "Judas, servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James." What Jude is this? There is a Judas Barsabbas, who was sent with Silas on a deputation from the Apostles to the Church at Antioch, and there is Judas, the son of James, who is mentioned in John's Gospel as having asked Jesus, "What is to come to pass that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?" but we have no ground for attributing the letter to either. Most probably the Jude intended is the brother of our Lord, who is content to follow the example of James and call himself not brother, but servant, of Jesus Christ.

Eusebius narrates that the grandchildren of this Jude were examined before Domitian, as the Emperor had heard that they belonged to the Royal House of David, and feared that they might become rallying points for sedition. But, finding that they were poor peasants with only a few acres of land between them,

folk who aspired to a heavenly rather than an earthly kingdom, he dismissed them with contempt.

An interesting feature of this Epistle is the close resemblance between vers. 4-18 and 2 Pet. 2¹-3³, which points to borrowing on one side or the other; most scholars think that the priority belongs to Jude.

Those against whom the author warns his readers are certain "false brethren" who by their immoral conduct are denying the Lord, who "defile the flesh, and set at nought dominion, and rail at dignities." In contrast with the sins of these evil-livers Jude sets before his readers the Christian ideal exhorting them to stand fast by the Faith, to keep themselves in the love of God, "looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."

REVELATION.

APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE.

The Book of Revelation is the sole representative in the New Testament of a special class of literature, known as apocalyptic, which flourished among the Jews in the centuries immediately preceding and following the birth of Christ. Of this literature many examples have been discovered and studied within recent years, and much light has been thrown on the character and interpretation of the Revelation of John. The best known apocalypse—the prototype, indeed,

of them all—is found in the Old Testament in the Book of Daniel; but this was followed by many others, all marked by the same characteristics. There is, for example, the *Book of Enoch*, which was composed at various times in the second and first centuries B.C. It is this apocalypse that is quoted in the Epistle of Jude, and it is evident that it had considerable influence upon the New Testament writers, and was widely read and appreciated by the early Christians. It is written in the name of Enoch, “the seventh from Adam,” and purports to give an account of visions seen by him. There are many resemblances to the Book of Revelation. “In both there is a Tree of life and a Book of life, heavenly beings clothed in white, stars falling from heaven, horses wading through rivers of blood, spirits presiding over the winds and the waters, and a fiery abyss awaiting notorious sinners.”

Another important Jewish apocalypse is the *Fourth Book of Ezra* (2 Esdras in the English Apocrypha). It was called into existence by the overthrow of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, and the calamities which had overtaken the Jews; and the problem that faces the author is why God has permitted these disasters to fall upon His chosen people. Like the writer of the Revelation he looks to the approaching end to bring the solution of the problem. This present evil age is drawing to a close, and God is about to bring in a new age of peace and righteousness. Other writings of this class, which can only be mentioned here, are the *Assumption of Moses*, the *Apocalypse of Baruch*, the *Ascension of*

Isaiah, the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, and the Sibylline Oracles.

The first thing to be noticed about apocalyptic is that it succeeded prophecy. It was when the prophet had ceased to speak that the apocalyptist began to write. Prophecy was at its best in the eighth, seventh, and sixth centuries before Christ. But the voice of prophecy ceased, and apocalyptic writings flourished in the second and first centuries B.C. These writings were always synonymous with bad times for the nation—bad times both within and from without. Internally, there was the worship of legalism and ceremonialism. The priests dominated Jewish life and thought, and there was no prophet's voice to cheer and inspire. Externally, the people of God were persecuted by heathen powers, oppressed and burdened in spirit. It was in such circumstances that the apocalyptist arose, and his writing might be called a literature of persecution. One aim which he had in writing was to strengthen the people and give them steadfastness, courage, and endurance in the midst of their trials. But how does he uphold the people's faith? Not by assuring them that the world would gradually improve. He has given up all hope of the present. What he does is to lift the veil from the future and speak to them of a sure deliverance and final victory. This is what the word "apocalypse" means—an unveiling, or disclosure, of the future; a vision of "the last things." In that coming crisis God would lead His people to triumph, and judgment would fall upon their enemies. There

would be a great catastrophe ushering in a new age and a new world, where righteousness and peace would dwell.

The apocalypse generally takes the form of visions. Daniel, after long fasting, stands by the river and has a vision of a heavenly Being who reveals future events. Ezekiel was among the captives by the river Chebar, and the heavens were opened and he saw visions of God. John was "in the spirit on the Lord's day" in the small rocky island of Patmos, and the heavens were opened to him and God's plans revealed. These visions pictured the fulfilling of Israel's ancient hopes and the final working out of the Divine purpose for the world. The people were assured that the dark hours of a long night were past and that the morning was at hand.

There are certain literary peculiarities of apocalyptic writings. The element of the mysterious is very marked. There is the use of fantastic imagery, such as the "beasts," where the qualities of men, birds, reptiles, and imaginary creatures are mixed up in a striking way. And there is the use of symbolical language in speaking of certain persons, things, or events, such as the "horns," the "seven seals," the "scarlet woman," and many others. But it must be remembered that these are used in the literature of the time and have come to be conventional and traditional. Another feature is the introduction of angels. It is through angels that the Lord delivers His message to men. They are His interpreters to the Seer, and explain to him the mysteries of the world and the unseen future.

When he writes his apocalypse the author does not send it out under his own name. It is one of the peculiarities of this class of literature that it is practically always pseudonymous. We know nothing at all about the man behind the book. He veils his identity under the name of some great figure of the past, such as Enoch, Moses, Isaiah, or Ezra. The Book of Revelation, however, differs in this respect from all the other apocalypses. It bears its author's name on its forefront. "By whomsoever it was written, he was a man who rightly gave his name as John."

This great Christian Apocalypse comes out of the time of Domitian, and reflects the situation of the Church at that period of stress and trial. It has much in common with earlier Jewish apocalypses. It shares the characteristics peculiar to this type of literature—its weird figures and symbols, the ministry of angels, and its visions of the last things. It has the same conventional character as other apocalypses, and much of its imagery is taken from the Old Testament. But while there are many resemblances, there are also manifold differences. It is not anonymous, for one thing, and, unlike other apocalypses, it is addressed to certain Churches quite as definitely as any of the Apostle Paul's letters. But more important, it is written by one who is conscious of being a prophet and in line with the great prophets of the Old Testament; concerned like them with contemporary events, and seeking to meet the needs of his own time, but concerned also with the future, seeing beyond the veil, interpreting

the will of God, uttering the mind of Him who is, and was, and is to come.

THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA.

The number seven was associated by the Jews with the ideas of sacredness and completeness. John makes use of it many times in the Revelation with a symbolical rather than a literal significance, and it is no doubt intended here to represent the whole Church. The seven churches to which the letters are sent lie on the main roads, and are named in the order in which they would be visited by a messenger starting from Ephesus and going north to Pergamum, then inland to Thyatira, and thence south to Laodicea.

The first letter is addressed to the Christian community in *Ephesus*. A description of the city has already been given (*Ephesus*, p. 200), but something may be added here as to the conditions of the Ephesian Church when this letter was written. These Churches along the main roads were continually exposed to visits from itinerant teachers who professed themselves to be apostles or delegates of other Churches, and abused the hospitality of the Christian communities. We do not know what methods were used by the Ephesians in detecting and exposing these false apostles, but they seem to have been successful. The "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles," an early Christian document, declares that a true apostle is to be known by his disinterestedness, and that if he asks money or prolongs

his visit for more than two days he is to be looked upon as an impostor.

The Church is praised for its patience and its labours, its hatred of false teaching, its exposure of false apostles ; but it has fallen away from the warm Christian love of earlier years, and the warning is uttered : " Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works ; or else I come to thee, and will move thy candlestick out of its place " (2⁵). Sir W. M. Ramsay suggests that it is a change in the local position of the Church which is foretold. He describes Ephesus as a city of change which has been again and again compelled to move its position in order to keep near the sea. But the sternness of the warning seems to imply more than this—the destruction of the Church ; the candlestick will be taken away altogether.

Smyrna was one of the foremost cities of Asia Minor in wealth and commercial importance, and unquestionably first in beauty. From an early date it had allied itself with Rome, and never wavered in its allegiance. Cicero speaks of it as " the city of our most faithful and ancient allies," and it is the note of fidelity that sounds in this Epistle. The Jews in the city were bitterly hostile to the Christians, and had informed against them before the Roman officials. John calls them, in strong language, " a synagogue of Satan," and prophesies that they will bring still greater suffering upon the Church—imprisonment and even death ; but faithfulness unto death will be rewarded with the crown of life. In the promise of " the crown of life " there

may be a reference to the cluster of splendid buildings, on the top of the hill Pagos, which was called the crown, or garland, of Smyrna. Apollonius had advised the citizens to be more concerned about "a crown of good citizens rather than one of buildings," and now the seer promises a new crown to Smyrna, "a crown of life."

The third letter is addressed to *Pergamum*, the capital of the Roman province of Asia. Ramsay calls it "the royal city," and considers that the opening address to the Church, "These things saith he that hath the sharp two-edged sword" (2¹³), is specially appropriate in view of the rank and position of the city. The sword is the symbol of authority, and so He who has "the absolute and universal authority speaks to the Church situated in the city where official authority dwells."

Pergamum was an important centre of the religious life of Asia, the seat of the worship of Asclepius the Healer, and a stronghold of the cult of Emperor worship, which the writer of the Book of Revelation regards as the great enemy of Christianity.

Thyatira, which receives the longest letter, was the least important of the Seven Cities. It was situated on the borders of Lydia and Mysia, "in an open, smiling vale, bordered by gently sloping hills."

Thyatira was a town of guilds. There were guilds of bakers, dyers, potters, workers in brass, tanners, workers in wool and linen, and so on, the dyers and the workers in wool being probably the most numerous, for the manufacture of dyed fabrics was the chief

industry of the town. Lydia, of whom we read in the Acts, probably represented a Thyatiran trade guild. It was in connection with these guilds that difficulties arose in the Church. The problem which faced the Christians was whether it was right for them to share in the common meals of the guild, which were frequently of a sacrificial character and often ended in scenes of gross licentiousness. Some well-known woman in the Church was using her influence to lead the people astray by advocating a liberal attitude to pagan customs and countenancing the practice of eating meats offered to idols. John regards her as a modern Jezebel, because she is seducing the Church even as Jezebel of old seduced Ahab and caused him to serve heathen gods.

There is a peculiar appropriateness in the exhortation, "Be watchful," which is addressed to the Church at *Sardis*. It was lack of watchfulness that brought some of its greatest disasters upon the city.

"Six centuries before Christ the rich Lydian king, Croesus, imagined himself safe in Sardis, with its perpendicular rock fifteen hundred feet in height. But there was a fissure in the rock which gave foothold to careful climbers advancing in single file, and in his vain confidence Croesus neglected to watch this point, until one night the besieging army of Cyrus advanced up the dangerous cliff, literally 'like a thief in the night,' and by morning the fortress was captured and the Lydian empire broken. Three hundred years later the same thing was done by another invading army, and these

facts of history were stamped on the memory of the people of Asia Minor.”¹

Commenting on the words, “Thou hast a name that thou livest, and thou art dead,” Ramsay says, “No city in the whole province of Asia had a more splendid history in past ages than Sardis. No city of Asia at that time showed such a melancholy contrast between past splendour and present decay as Sardis. Its history was the exact opposite of the record of Smyrna. Smyrna was dead and yet lived. Sardis lived and yet was dead.”

The Church at *Philadelphia* is praised almost as warmly as that at Smyrna. Both had suffered at the hands of the Jews and both had proved faithful and true.

Philadelphia was situated in the centre of a large and populous district and was a meeting-point of various important trade routes—from Smyrna on the west and from inner parts of the province on the north-east and south-east. Thus the Church had special opportunities for successful evangelistic work, and it is held by some that this is the allusion in the words, “I have set before thee a door opened” (3⁸).

Strabo speaks of Philadelphia as “a city full of earthquakes,” and says that in his time its inhabitants had for the most part forsaken it and were living in the surrounding country. There may be a reference to this, as Ramsay suggests, in the promise of the pillar, the symbol of stability. “He that overcometh, I will

¹ J. S. Corlett, *Christ and the Churches*, p. 101.

make him a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go out thence no more" (3¹²). The victor shall be shaken by no disaster in the great day of trial and shall never again require to go out and take refuge in the open country.

There is a wealth of local allusion in the severe letter to *Laodicea*. The city was destroyed by an earthquake in A.D. 60, but its inhabitants set to work to rebuild it, and showed their independent spirit by rejecting the offer of an imperial subsidy. This gives point to the words, "I am rich, and have gotten riches, and have need of nothing" (3¹⁷). It was a great trading and banking centre, and that, again, gives special significance to the words, "I counsel thee to buy of me gold refined by fire" (3¹⁸). There are references, which have been already noted (p. 286), to a special kind of wool produced in this district and to a powder or ointment which was used for affections of the eyes.

Laodicea was a worldly-minded Church, proud of its material prosperity and intellectual endowments. It had no prominent sins, such as John charges against Pergamum and Thyatira, but its religion was a tepid affair. Better to be cold, says John, to be open enemies than lukewarm Christians, self-complacent, self-satisfied. It is the sin of the Pharisees, and John is enunciating the same principle as his Master, "Verily I say unto you, that the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you" (Mt. 21³¹).

THE PERSECUTION OF THE CHRISTIANS.

The Romans did not interfere with the social customs and institutions of the peoples whom they conquered, provided that the interests of the State were not affected. They were equally tolerant in matters of religion. Their policy was to permit subject nations to retain their gods and their religious rites and to worship freely in their own way so long as they were loyal to the Empire and acknowledged the local deities. It was, however, a policy founded entirely upon political expediency. What the Romans were concerned about was the unity and peace of the State, and religions were tolerated in so far as they promoted, or at least did not conflict with, these interests. Take the case of the Jews. In the eyes of the Romans, Judaism was "a narrow-minded and uncharitable religion, marked by many strange and absurd practices and superstitions," but they found it wiser to overlook this and to allow the Jews liberty of worship rather than to run the risk of offending their religious susceptibilities. In fact they treated them with exceptional favour, for it was the Jews alone who were granted exemption from the worship of the Emperor.

And at first the Christians enjoyed the same privileges. The Romans regarded them as simply a Jewish sect, and protected their missionaries against Jewish attack under the impression that what they had to do with was simply quarrelling between factions. But as soon as they became aware of its separate existence these

privileges were no longer extended to Christianity. This would take place probably about the time of Paul's trial at Rome.

In July of the year A.D. 64, the famous fire took place in Rome which destroyed a large part of the city, and popular report accused Nero of being the cause of the calamity. He was naturally greatly alarmed, and sought to divert suspicion from himself by laying the blame upon the Christians, who were already regarded with suspicion and hatred by the people. What followed is best told in the words of Tacitus :

“ First those were arrested who confessed that they were Christians. Then, on their information, a vast multitude were convicted, not so much on the charge of setting fire to the city as of hatred to the human race. In their deaths they were made the objects of sport, for they were covered with the skins of wild beasts and were torn to pieces by dogs, or nailed to crosses, or set fire to, so that when day declined they might serve for lights at night. Nero offered his own gardens for that spectacle and exhibited a Circensian game, indiscriminately mingling with the common people in the habit of a charoteer, or else standing in his chariot. Hence a feeling of compassion arose towards the sufferers, guilty as they were and deserving to be made examples of by capital punishment, because they seemed to be destroyed not for the public good but as victims to the ferocity of one man.”

This persecution was local rather than universal, but it stamped itself for all time upon the memory of the Church by its fiendish cruelty. According to Christian tradition, both Peter and Paul met their death at this time.

It does not seem that Nero persecuted the Christians on the ground of their faith, but on the basis of popular

dislike. Tertullian sums up the attitude of the populace in the familiar words, "They think the Christians to blame for every public calamity, for every loss that afflicts the people. If the Tiber rises to the walls, or the Nile does not rise over the fields, if the sky gives no rain, if there is an earthquake, a famine, a plague, immediately the cry arises, 'The Christians to the lions.'"

In the second great outbreak, however, which took place under Domitian, the ground of hostility had to some extent changed, and the Christians were now persecuted definitely for their Faith, and especially for their refusal to worship the Emperor. Of this persecution Cassius Dio, the Roman historian, says :

"And the same year Domitian slew many others including even Flavius Clemens, the consul, though he was a cousin, and was married to Flavia Domitilla, herself a niece of Domitian. The charge brought against them both was atheism, under which many others who drifted into Jewish ways were condemned. Some were killed, and others were at least deprived of their property. But Domitilla was merely banished to Pandateria."

Lightfoot speaks of the Neronian persecution as "a wholesale onslaught of reckless fury," though restricted in its area. That of Domitian was rather "a succession of sharp, sudden, partial assaults, striking down one here and one there from malice, or jealousy, or caprice, and harassing the Church with an agony of suspense."

After Domitian, persecution of the Christians broke out sporadically. The attitude of the government towards the Christians at the beginning of the second

century is revealed in the correspondence between the Roman writer Pliny and Trajan the Emperor. Pliny, who was governor of the province of Bithynia, wrote a letter to Trajan, asking how he should deal with the Christians. Trajan replied, in effect, that there could be no hard-and-fast rule. If the Christians are accused and convicted they must be punished. But if they deny the accusation and clear themselves by worshipping the gods, they should be pardoned. A magistrate also should make a distinction between a Christian and a murderer or a thief, and not hunt the Christians down unless they are formally accused. Christians, in short, were regarded as criminals and outcasts, and their treatment depended simply on the attitude of the governor and the feeling of the people at the time.

THE LEGEND OF THE RETURNING NERO.

There are several references in the Book of Revelation to a curious legend which was current in the author's day regarding the Emperor Nero. Nero died by his own hand in a freedman's house, 4 miles from Rome, in June A.D. 68, in the thirty-first year of his age and the fourteenth of his reign. Although Nero had actually died, the circumstances of his death were so mysterious, and the witnesses so few, that doubts began to be expressed as to the fact, and a rumour sprang up that he was still alive and in hiding. Then it was said that he had fled to the East and had taken refuge at the Parthian court, and that he might be expected to return

with an army and avenge himself on Rome. We are told that Nero himself had been led by certain predictions to believe that he would be dethroned, but that he would rise to greatness again, and that the East would be the scene of his future triumphs.

These rumours not unnaturally led to the appearance of various pretenders who claimed to be Nero, and one of them at least, who bore a strong resemblance to the dead Emperor, was recognized by the Parthian king. Belief in these rumours was shared by the Christians in common with the Roman populace, and while there may have been some who would have welcomed Nero's return, they were not to be found among the Christians, who remembered him as their first great persecutor.

As time wore on, and it seemed no longer probable that Nero was still alive, the expectation of his return took a different form. It was now believed that he would come back from the underworld to reign once more on earth, and in the Christian imagination this ghostly supernatural figure became identified with the Antichrist who would appear in the last days.

The author of the Revelation frequently takes up a familiar idea and adapts it to his use, and he has done so in the case of this legend. Describing the beast which comes up out of the sea, he says, "I saw one of his heads as though it had been smitten unto death; and his death-stroke was healed," and in a subsequent verse he defines the "death-stroke" as the "stroke of the sword," which was the actual manner of Nero's death (Rev. 13³. 14). Another passage in which the

late form of the legend appears is chapter 17^s: "The beast that thou sawest was, and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss, and to go into perdition." The beast dies and lives again even as Christ Himself "became dead, and behold, He is alive." "The Antichrist is to be, at all points, a hellish parody of the Christ. As the Church looked for, and prayed for, the return of the one, so her foes were to await the return or resurrection of the other; and the climax of the world-conflict was to take the shape of a struggle between the two at the head of their respective armies."

EMPEROR WORSHIP.

One of the bitterest foes which Christianity had to face in the early centuries was Emperor worship. In Eastern civilizations like those of Egypt, Babylon, and Persia divine honours had been paid to monarchs from an early time. The Egyptian Pharaohs, for example, claimed descent from a god, and were worshipped as deities during their lifetime. Among the Romans the claim that the Emperor on his decease became a god was readily admitted. After his death a temple was erected to Julius Cæsar in Ephesus bearing the inscription, "To the goddess Rome and the divine Julius." From the deification of the dead to the worship of the living was only a step, and that step was taken in the following reign when Augustus accepted divine honours for himself from his subjects in the Eastern provinces of the Empire, and permitted a

temple to be dedicated to his worship at Pergamum. Augustus, however, was under no illusion as to his divine powers, and encouraged the new worship in the provinces only for political reasons, recognizing its value as a means of unifying the Empire. He refused to accept divine honours in Rome, and allowed no temple to be erected to his worship in the Capital. What Augustus had sanctioned his successors carried on, but it was not until the time of Domitian that the cult of the Emperor became a serious menace to Christianity.

Earlier emperors had not as a rule insisted upon having divine honours accorded them, but it was otherwise with the vain and insolent Domitian. He, more than any other before him—if we except the half-insane Caligula—exacted full homage to his own divinity, and claimed the title “Lord and God.” What this meant for the Christians, whose faith forbade such an acknowledgment, it is not difficult to realize. So long as they were guilty only of impiety—refusal to worship the heathen deities—a certain tolerance was shown to them; but when the reigning Emperor was himself placed among the gods, refusal to worship him was more than impiety; it was the crime of *majestas*, of disloyalty and treason.

In the provinces this question of worshipping the Emperor would meet the Christians at every turn. His image and superscription appeared upon their coins. Games and festivals were held in connection with his worship, and were presided over by the Asiarch,

or chief priest of the commune of Asia. Legal documents were attested with an oath by the "fortune" of the Emperor. In their business dealings, also, Christians were faced with what appears to have been a systematic boycott, to which we have a reference in Rev. 13^{16, 17}: "He causeth all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free and the bond, that there be given them a mark on their right hand, or upon their forehead; and that no man should be able to buy or to sell, save he that hath the mark, even the name of the beast or the number of his name." It was customary to stamp business documents in red ink with the name and year of the reigning Emperor as a certificate of registration. This stamp was called a *charagma*, and that is the word which John uses and which is translated "mark." Clearly the stamp is something which was an obvious proof of loyalty, and a test of some kind, such as burning incense to the Emperor, may have been exacted from the Christians. Refusal to comply with any of these requirements would at once involve the Christian in suspicion and lead to official inquiries which might issue in death. Those who refused to worship the Beast and to bear his mark must be prepared for martyrdom.

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